

CORPORATE GOVERNING BODY OF GODALMING COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the Curriculum and Quality Committee of Godalming College held at the College on Monday 9th November 2009 at 7.00pm

- Present:** Stephen Dennison (Chairman)
Victoria Elliott
Angela Gallagher-Brett
Robin Galliver
Helena Hockridge
Neil Parsons
- Advisors:** Dave Cartwright (Assistant Principal)
May O'Keeffe (Assistant Principal)
- In Attendance:** Stella Halloran (Clerk to the Corporation)

ACTION

- 1. Apologies for absence**
All were present.
New members, Victoria Elliott, Helena Hockridge and Neil Parsons were welcomed to the committee.
- 2. Declaration of Interests**
Neil Parsons declared an interest in Item 5(e) as he teaches in that Faculty.
- 3. Minutes**
The minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2009 were approved and signed.
- 4. Matters arising from the minutes**
Item 7 – Stretch and Challenge
May O'Keeffe and Dave Cartwright reported that this initiative had been introduced to students at all ability levels to encourage them to undertake more independent learning and to read more. There was a greater emphasis in the A2 year, although students were encouraged to work independently in their AS year.
Faculties had introduced this in different ways and it was proving particularly successful in stretching those on the C/D boundary.
Governors were assured that there was still time in the week to assist those who were finding this approach difficult.
The Extended Project fits this approach well and the overall success of the initiative will be measured by an improvement in final grades. The student governor was enthusiastic about the approach.

It was agreed that 'Stretch and Challenge' would be an item on each agenda this year and that a Head of Faculty could be invited to a future meeting to update governors on its implementation within their faculty. Chair / Clerk

Item 8 – Complaints Procedure

Governors were advised that the Complaints Procedure, as discussed at the last meeting of this committee, had been adopted by the Corporation. There were two other avenues through which complaints could be channelled – complaints against the Principal being notified and dealt with through the Chairman of the Corporation and the disciplinary policy, and complaints against the Corporation (collectively) through the Corporation's complaints procedure.

Governors were happy that these routes served all situations when a complaint might be raised.

Item 6 - Diplomas

There was nothing more to add as neither the College nor the Federation Schools were offering diplomas.

5. **Self- Assessment Reports (SARs)**

May O'Keeffe and Dave Cartwright reported as follows:

a) Curriculum

There had been successes in broadening the College's additional studies courses. The Extended Project had produced excellent results last year and this year 288 students had chosen to enrol on it (*cf* 106 last year). BTEC had a very high grade rate with 63% obtaining a distinction at level 3.

It was hoped to improve the grades in 'Critical Thinking' and to improve the retention rate on the Extended Project. Recruitment to Business Studies had been disappointing, but there had been increased recruitment to Economics. Results in Music Technology were not as good as hoped for at AS; the course will change to a BTEC in September 2010.

Discussion on the importance of both Critical Thinking and the Extended Project highlighted the facts that some universities do not take them into account in their offer to a student, although both attract points.

6th Form Bac – a proposed wrap-around recognition of all the student has done whilst at College – academic, skills, courses other than A2 etc. It was currently in the planning stage and would be piloted from September 2010. The committee requested that Dave Cartwright give a presentation on progress at the Summer term meeting.

D Cartwright

b) Access

This course was for those students entering the College without 5 A – C grades at GCSE. The courses undertaken were GCSEs and BTEC level 2s. 60 students were enrolled on access courses.

Success was patchy – the GCSE results were lower than hoped for, but the BTEC results were outstanding.

There will be an Internal Quality Review (IQR) on Level 2 provision in the Spring term.

Attendance on these courses appeared to be lower than the College as a whole, but reasons for this were explored, resulting in a request for a change in the way this is measured.

c) 14 – 16

Courses are run by the College for about 40 students from Waverley Federation Schools in Business Studies, Media and Child Care.

Achievement is very good, although there is some concern about retention rates. The reasons for drop out have been identified and strategies put in place to improve.

This year an Italian GCSE twilight course has been introduced for about 40 students from Federation Schools. This has been done in part to help Godalming put a greater focus on languages as Federation Schools are tending to drop a second language.

d) Arts and Languages Faculty

Dave Cartwright reported that this was a high performing faculty which made a huge contribution to the general enrichment of students across the College, not just those taking examinations in the Faculty's subject areas.

Next year it would be putting in place a German express course for able linguists.

Student Voice was an issue identified for further work. Currently students complete a feedback form at the end of the year, but the response rate was not as good as it might be, largely due to students being preoccupied with exams. More immediate opportunities for students to feed back their thoughts were therefore being sought. The student governor reported that as a result of immediate feedback, practice was being changed quickly to better suit the needs of the students.

The lack of parity in terms of ILT between departments was noted – English, in particular was requesting improved facilities.

e) Science and Vocational Faculty

This faculty covers a diverse range of departments, from science and Maths to Business Studies and IT.

It has had excellent results in Science and Maths, with Business Studies very strong and very innovative. The establishment of a BTEC in IT has revolutionised that department.

The areas for improvement are similar to those for Arts and Languages.

f) Social Sciences

Student achievements in this faculty were outstanding. It is the smallest faculty and probably the most cohesive. It is therefore easy to implement new initiatives across the faculty.

It lends itself to 'Stretch and Challenge' and is having a push on e-learning and peer assessment.

In the Summer there will be a social science festival – all students (not just those within this faculty) will be able to raise their awareness as citizens.

Clarification was sought on 'Inclusion' – it was explained that there were opportunities to start courses within this Faculty without any previous experience / exams in the subject. The results were very good, even for those who had not taken the subject before coming to College.

g) Student Guidance

Discussion centred on the introduction of a Student Union and the student view was sought. Currently the Student Council is staff-led, but a Union would be Student-led and would be organised in line with the National Union of Students.

It is seen as a way of increasing the student voice, although the student governor expressed the reservations of some sections of the student body.

The Committee had, at a previous meeting, requested that Carol Horlock be invited to the Spring term meeting to report on the implementation of the new areas of Student Guidance. This was still requested. *Clerk*

h) Quality Assurance

Alps and ALIs were explained, including the impact such scores had on motivating individual students.

The operation of 'Teaching Squares' was also explained.

The Chairman thanked May O'Keeffe and Dave Cartwright for their input into this item

6. Student Achievements Summer 2009

Governors had received the full breakdown of Summer exam results.

Dave Cartwright highlighted the following:

- 99% pass rate at A2
- AS results improved by 3% over last year
- A – B grade targets were hit 2 years ahead of schedule
- BTEC results were very high
- GCSE results were patchy
- The Extended Project gained 32 A* out of 86 entries

*M O'Keeffe to
pass on
congratulations
and thanks to
staff*

The Committee wished to thank all staff for their hard work and to congratulate them on the achievements of last year.

7. College SAR and Development Plan 2009 - 2010

The review of the past year indicated that targets had been met in the areas monitored by this committee.

In the 2009 – 2010 Development Plan section it was noted that for applications for September 2010, the conversion rate had been amended to 51% from non-federation schools. This was due to the experience of this year when the conversion rate of applications to enrolments had not been as high as anticipated.

The loss of BTS was reflected in Item 56. The College was seeking ways of engaging with the local business community – students on work experience as well as students going in to local primary schools to help with reading. A level Physics students go in to Federation Schools to mentor able scientists.

Governors questioned whether there were any partnerships with local independent schools, but there weren't; the links made were with state schools.

The areas of the Development Plan relevant to this committee were agreed for recommendation to the Corporation at their December meeting.

8. **Risk register**

Items 2.1 and 2.2 were noted as of relevance to this committee.
The high risk at 2.2 was noted due to the uncertainty of funding.

9. **Proposed term dates 2010 – 2011**

These were agreed for recommendation to the Corporation at their December meeting.

10. **Date of next Meeting**

Monday 22nd February 2010 at 7pm

Thanks were expressed to May O’Keeffe and Dave Cartwright for their input to the meeting and to the College for continuing to be innovative even in the light of such good achievements.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed:

Date: