



## **Quality, Standards and Achievement Committee**

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009**

**5 p.m.**

The Partnership Room, 14-16 Centre (Bridges)  
1<sup>st</sup> floor, Workshop Block

### **A G E N D A**

*Members are reminded of their obligation to declare openly any conflict of interest arising from a matter before the Corporation.*

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008 (attached)
3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

#### **Items for consideration**

4. To consider the final report from Ofsted on the Inspection of Bedford College, November 2008 **PAPER 1**
5. To consider key issues arising from the feedback report from the British Quality Foundation 2008 UK Excellence Awards **PAPER 2**
6. To consider Success Rates for 2007-08 **PAPER 3**

#### **Items for information**

7. To receive a progress report on the MoT process **PAPER 4**
8. To receive a progress report on Lesson Observations **PAPER 5**
9. To receive a Customer Feedback report **PAPER 6**
10. Any Other Business
11. Date of next scheduled meeting: Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009, 5 pm

# BEDFORD COLLEGE

## Quality, Standards and Achievement Committee

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2009

5 p.m.

The Partnership Room, 14-16 Centre (Bridges)

**Present:** Mr. M.Y. Kiteley (in the Chair)  
Mr. K.A. Bromboszcz  
Mr. B. Hundal  
Ms. J. Hunt  
Mrs. E. Punter [QSA01-09/09]  
Mr. I. Pryce

**In attendance:** Mr. R. Marriott, Corporation member designate  
Mr. D. Pridmore, Director of Teaching and Learning  
Mr. T. Sanderson, Director of Quality & Marketing  
Mrs. I. Lennox, Clerk to the Corporation

The Chair welcomed Roger Marriott to his first meeting and thanked him for agreeing to membership of this committee once his appointment to the Corporation Board had been formalised.

**QSA01/09** Apologies for absence were received from Mr. M. Ward, Mr. D. Simms and Miss S. Thomas.

**QSA02/09** Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2008 were considered, approved and signed.

**QSA03/09** Matters Arising

QSA19/26/08: Engineering

In response to a question from the Chair, the Director of Teaching and Learning was able to reassure the committee that good progress was continuing in Engineering with the appointment of a new Assistant Director.

QSA30/08: Ofsted

The Chair extended thanks to Messrs. Bromboszcz and Whitlock who had played a key role in a review meeting of the college's 2008 Self Assessment Report.

QSA38/08: Lesson Observations

Reference was made to under-developed differentiation, and questions were asked as to how the impact of college-wide initiatives could be assessed. Both the Chief Executive and the Director of Quality gave a number of examples, including follow-up reports (on observations, MoTs) brought back to the committee and detailed performance monitoring reports to Executive meetings.

QSA42/08: Distance Learning

A report on distance learning in the widest sense would be brought to the next meeting.

**QSA04/09** Ofsted Inspection Report November 2008

The Director of Teaching & Learning (DP) gave the background to the recent Ofsted inspection, explaining that the college had had a relatively light touch since it was proportional to risk. The Chair had no hesitation in speaking on behalf of the Board as a whole in congratulating the management team and all the staff on the outstanding result.

Discussion then centred on the significant challenge of maintaining this level of achievement and moving the college to still greater heights. DP had detected no complacency amongst staff post-inspection but rather a real focus on areas still in need of improvement, especially since all were aware that minimum levels of performance were raised year-on-year by the LSC. The difficulty of obtaining a Grade 1 in Teaching and Learning and the impact of the Learning Shops on achievement were discussed. Most areas in need of improvement had been identified in the college's Self Assessment Report and action plans had been drawn up and were already being addressed. In response to questions, DP confirmed that staff in those areas were well aware of what was now required; he recognised that the procedure for assessing the impact of equality plans needed further development.

The Chief Executive reported on the recent senior management Away Days and the drive underway to involve many more staff in decision-making processes, particularly those relating to curriculum planning. In view of the number of new initiatives currently occupying the management team, members welcomed this approach but hoped that a winning formula would not be lost in change for change's sake.

Members again expressed their recognition of an excellent Ofsted inspection result, and Paper 1 was received.

#### **QSA05/09 Feedback from the 2008 EFQM Submission**

A summary of the feedback from the British Quality Foundation following the college's submission for the 2008 UK Excellence Awards was reviewed by the Director of Quality (TS) and discussed at length. Overall progress had been made since the college's submission the previous year, reflected in the 'points' awarded; TS undertook to forward a breakdown of the points to committee members. Disappointment was expressed, however, that there was no mechanism by which the college could challenge apparent inaccuracies or false assumptions in the official report,

In response to questions, the Chief Executive informed members that the college did not intend to make a further submission for the overall award in the coming year, in part due to the drain on management time. He assured members, however, that the momentum would not be lost, that action plans arising out of the feedback were being addressed, that the college was fully committed to a series of process reviews and would continue to measure itself against national criteria. Ways in which the creativity and innovation of students could be harnessed to the full were discussed, and Paper 2 was received.

#### **QSA06/09 Success Rates**

Success rate figures submitted with Paper 3 were reviewed by the Chief Executive and showed a significant year-on-year improvement to an overall figure of 83% in 2007-08. Sector figures for general FE colleges related to the previous year. He drew particular attention to the increase in success rates relating to 16-18 courses and again referred to the Learning Shops in his explanation of the slight fall in success rates for 19+ Level 2, at the same time acknowledging the valuable work in that area bringing students from Level 1 to Level 2.

In response to questions, IP explained the reasons the college had had to change its target-setting process, a model that had previously been commended by the LSC. The target of 86% success rate by 2010 had been built up from programme level. The Director of Teaching & Learning and the Director of Quality outlined in detail

measures that were underway to ensure the new target would be met. It was agreed that more information on the proportion of students gaining high levels would be valuable; DP reported more time being spent on value-added and achievement tracking. Paper 3 was received.

#### **QSA07/09 Programme Area MoT Progress Report**

The Director of Quality (TS) reminded members that the second phase of the college's Programme Area MoT process was concentrating solely on courses that had been at or below national benchmarks for three years.

Of the four MoTs completed under the new regime, members' attention focused primarily on the two that had concluded a limited level of assurance. Although Performing Arts had as yet shown no real improvement, the Director of Teaching & Learning (DP) expressed confidence that the Centre Director and a newly appointed Assistant Director would drive forward the measures necessary to improve performance. Since there had been retention problems, there was a need to respond to a curriculum re-structure so that achievement could be recorded after one year for students on a two-year course. It was hoped that staff would make contact with professionals in other colleges to seek best practice in the sector. As far as Engineering was concerned, DP reported a discernible improvement in the middle management approach to embracing the issues, driven by a newly appointed Assistant Director.

The Chair asked that the practice of inviting the Centre Directors to the meeting be continued if the level of assurance on these courses had not improved at the three month review.

The Chair then reminded members that assurance had been given to fellow Board members at the recent Development Day that this committee would ensure on their behalf that serious issues arising out of meetings with students in Child Care would be addressed by the management team. Both DP and TS were able to report a series of measures being implemented by the two newly appointed Assistant Directors and that, in response to feedback from members, they had called a focus group of students. In fact, formal complaints from that area had decreased in the past year, and lesson observation profiles and Key Skills had markedly improved. A comprehensive report on this area was requested for the next meeting, and Paper 4 was received.

#### **QSA09/09 Lesson Observations**

Members had always given their full support to the use of external consultants in the lesson observation process and were pleased to note that the college's grading profile was now above benchmarks provided by the consultants, all practising Ofsted specialist inspectors. It was acknowledged that much progress had been made in the quality of teaching and learning in the college in the past year or so, and noted that the 'Observation Plus' mentoring process would support the four lecturers with Grade 4 observations. Paper 5 was received.

#### **QSA10/09 Customer Feedback**

The Director of Quality reviewed the feedback from customers; employer feedback would be available for the next meeting. He responded to questions on the results of the First Impressions Survey and explained that issues on the accuracy of timetables related to changes being made after the start of term.

Much emphasis was placed by members on the way in which the results of the First Impressions Survey were communicated back to the student body, and more importantly the measures taken by the college in response to the results. Use of the intranet and posters was noted, but disappointment expressed that there had been no breakthrough with a student paper. Questions were asked as to whether the Student Voice strategy was embedded within the college culture and it was with regret that the student input had, unusually, been missing at this meeting, due to apologies from the student members. The Chief Executive resolved to remain proactive as far as the student voice was concerned, and Paper 6 was received.

**QSA11/09** **The next meeting** might be changed from its scheduled date of 13<sup>th</sup> May; the Clerk would consult.