

AQUINAS COLLEGE
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE

Date: 14 October 2014
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: The College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Dr P Beatty, Mr B Hickey, Mr A Martin, Cllr T McGee, Dr A Smith and Mr D Pearson.

Cllr T McGee in the Chair

Before the meeting commenced Cllr McGee welcomed Dr Smith to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received and accepted from Ms H Delahan. Mr Pearson advised Governors that Ms Delahan was on maternity leave having given birth to a baby boy.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Governors and Staff were asked to declare any interest, which they may have in any of the items on the Agenda for this meeting. No interests were declared.

3. INTRODUCTION

Cllr McGee outlined why it had been necessary to establish a Teaching and Learning Committee. The main reasons had been i) the reorganisation of A levels and GCSE ii) the fact that many staff have never taught linear subjects and iii) the Governing Body has a duty to look at what the impact will have on outcomes.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that each meeting would have a different focus. He added that he would welcome feedback from Governors on whether or not they were receiving enough information.

Each Governor was asked what they hoped to get out of the meetings. A general discussion took place on value added, Dashboard and Raise on Line. It was noted that a Dashboard would be provided for the college. Mr Hickey felt that there could be too much data provided - Governors need to have a summary of the key issues which would prompt Governors to seek answers to questions about outcomes. These are the questions that would likely be raised by inspectors.

4. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

A copy of the draft Committee Terms of Reference for the Teaching and Learning Committee had been circulated to all members prior to the meeting. After a full discussion a number of changes were made to the draft Committee Terms of Reference (copy attached to these minutes).

5. RESULTS OVERVIEW

Introducing this item Mr Pearson advised Governors that the college had i) a small Pathways provision (sub - Level 1), ii) a small GCSE provision (Level 2) and over 90% at Level 3.

Mr Pearson circulated a paper to all Governors that covered the following areas:

- i) Alps AS level – National Benchmarks
- ii) What an AS level Alps score of 1.0 means
- iii) Alps AS level – Raw results by subject for 2014
- iv) Alps AS level – Subject value added overview for 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014
- v) Alps A level – Raw results by subject for 2014
- vi) Alps AS level – Subject value added overview for 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014
- vii) Alps BTEC – Raw results by subject for 2014
- viii) Alps BTEC - Subject value added overview for 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014
- ix) Alps BTEC Certificate – Raw results by subject for 2014
- x) Alps BTEC Certificate - Subject value added overview for 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

Mr Pearson went through each paper and outlined the significance of the results shown. He advised Governors that the Alps for each area is published within 2/3 days of the results being announced. In terms on the national benchmarking grades 1, 2 and 3 are in the top 25% of providers, grades 4, 5 and 6 covers the middle 50% of providers, whilst grades 7, 8 and 9 are in the bottom 25% of providers.

Governors looked at specific subjects and asked Mr Pearson the reason for that particular figure.

6. QUALITY REVIEW MEETINGS

Mr Pearson circulated a paper to all Governors that indicated the grade that a department and subjects with the department had been given in September 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. In the Quality Review Meeting a department is given a grade based on its raw results, comparison to benchmarks and Alps score. Concerns are raised for any department or subject that is grade 3 or below. Mr Pearson advised Governors the he was pleased with the overall grades.

Mr Hickey asked how a department grade is reached from each subject. Mr Pearson replied by saying that each subject had a weighting. He agreed to provide a case study for a future meeting for Governors to see how it works in practice.

7. EVOLVING CURRICULUM

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the wider introduction of BTEC had been a success and had increased from less than 10% initially to 16% for the last 3 years and it likely to increase to 20% - 25% in the forthcoming years. Mr Pearson added that the college has improved its guidance and advice given to students to try to ensure that they are on the correct course for them.

Mr Hickey asked if the college had data on the destination of students after they left the college. Mr Pearson replied that the General Purposes Committee receives a report at its spring term meeting.

Dr Smith said that some subjects at BTEC are liked by employers and are considered favourably with A levels. Mr Pearson added that BTEC courses are also subject to reform.

8. LINEARITY 2015 ONWARDS

Mr Pearson circulated a paper to all Governors that indicated the dates that subjects would move to a linear A level. The change will begin in September 2015 and will be fully functional, for new students by September 2017. This means that that from 2015 to 2018 there will be a two tier A Level system. Between September 2015 and July 2018 some students might be doing all linear A Levels, some might do all modular A Levels and some (probably most) will do a combination of the two.

Cllr McGee asked what the college is doing to ensure that it is ready in September 2015 for teaching Linear A levels? Mr Pearson advised Governors that a number of different groups across the College are looking at the various issues. At the Quality Review meetings one of the questions is used to probe whether the department and specific subjects are ready for linearity? Mr Pearson added that there will be a need to ensure that the marketing of which subjects are linear is clear and that enrolment advice would be very important.

Cllr McGee felt it was important that the move to linear A levels be a standing item on the agenda of this committee.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr McGee asked members if they felt that the topics covered were the ones that this new committee needs to look at. He also asked was the level of information provided sufficient. All members felt that the balance was about right, but the work of the committee would evolve over a period of time.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that he would ensure that all Governors are kept up to date with progress and that he would let them have more information on of how the ALPS data might be used and a little more about the philosophy behind it. He would also include an up to date report on the dilemma that is A level reform.

Mr Pearson was thanked for his informative presentations.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10 February 2015 at 4.30pm

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____