

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College

Minutes of the Meeting of the Curriculum & Standards Committee held on Thursday 7 May 2009 at 5.00 pm

Present: Cllr E Lister (Chair)
Mr T J Fisher
Mrs G Laws
Miss J Grundy

In Attendance: Mr G Barker
Mrs A Blackburn
Dr S D Hunnisett
Mr L Job
Mrs J Wilson
Mr G Brookes (Clerk)

01/09 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr J Ramsden, Ms S Robinson and Mr C Wiper and were **accepted** by the Committee.

02/09 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2008 were **accepted** as a true record by the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

03/09 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

04/09 Outstanding References

There were no outstanding references.

05/09 Urgent Business

No urgent business was raised.

06/09 Curriculum Changes/Issues for 2009/10

06.1 Dr Hunnisett referred to the paper dated 29/04/09 which covered developments and issues concerning the curricula for 2009-10, including:

- New specification for most A2 level subjects from September 2008 (except Maths and Applied Subjects) and their implications.
- New A2 Courses
- Advanced Diploma Courses – offered as part of the Darlington 14-19 Partnership.

06.2 Points raised in discussion included:

- a. It is not yet known how the introduction of diplomas will be received by HE establishments and employees.
- b. The way ahead for QE will be clearer by September when the numbers wishing to take up diploma courses will be known.
- c. To date the take-up nationally has been low.
- d. Counselling and sound guidance for students will be essential.

The Committee **accepted** the report.

07/09 Student Numbers 2009/10

07.1 Dr Hunnisett referred to the Subject Data 2008 (dated 27/04/09) for Year 1 (2008-09) and the applications at 1 May 2009 for Year 0 (2009-10) and in particular to:

- a. There were over 4300 individual subject applications for AS level this year.
- b. Subjects attracting increased numbers included; Sciences, Film Studies, Business Studies, Law, German, Psychology and PE Coaching.

07.2 Data for Applied AS (VS), Applied GCSE (Double) and GCSE subjects was also provided.

07.3 Dr Hunnisett also referred to the data on AS to A2 Student Subject Choices (dated 03/04/09) for A2 subjects and applied A2 (V2) subjects.

The Committee **accepted** the report.

08/09 Changes to A levels

08.1 Mr Fisher referred to the Ofqual letter dated March 2009 which explained the changes to A levels and their implications, particularly during the transition period. Most A levels have been revised from a six unit structure to a four unit structure and the A* grade will be achievable in 2010 onwards.

08.2 There was a lengthy discussion about the interpretation of the changes and how the system would operate. Some reservations were expressed about achieving fair and consistent outcomes, especially during the transition period. Also, some adjustments to coursework may be needed.

08.3 Cllr Lister proposed that the Ofqual letter should be presented to the full Board. This was **agreed** by the Committee.

Action Mr Fisher

The Committee **accepted** the report.

09/09 Urgent Business Raised under Item 05/09

No urgent business was raised.

10/09 Confidentiality

No confidential items.

11/09 Date and Agenda for the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting has not yet been arranged.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.45 pm.