

STUDENTS LIAISON COMMITTEE of RICHMOND UPON THAMES COLLEGE
Minutes of Meeting held on 8th March 2016 at 4.15pm

Members Present: Rob Pope (Chair), Cathy Bird, Rebecca Courtaux, Daniel Volovsek (arr.4.25pm)

In attendance:

Clare Thornes (Clerk), John O’Shea (Vice Principal), Theresa Bray (Director of Q’y and Student Services) Jeff Lindsay (Head of Quality), Cait Orton (Youth Team) and STUDENTS - Ezra Smith, Daniella Adjemon and Temidayo Oyekan

Apologies: Paul Leonard, Tajay Bryan

A	PROCEDURAL
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting, and introductions were made. Apologies were received from Paul Leonard and Tajay Bryan.</p>
2	<p>Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items</p> <p>There were no declarations of interests.</p>
3	<p style="padding-left: 20px;">i. Minutes of Student Liaison Committee held on 18 November 2015 The minutes were approved.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">ii. Matters Arising No matter arising.</p>

B	FOR DISCUSSION
4	<p>Progress Report on Student Engagement Strategy</p> <p>RC explained that the Engagement Strategy pulls together several strands of activities. It has been adopted by the CLT and is in action.</p> <p>Governors suggested that, in the preamble, would it be good to mention ‘British Values’, then at points throughout the strategy, to make specific links to British Values (for example, linking the section on Student Union to democracy).</p> <p>There was a discussion about Curriculum Forums (Page 3 of the Strategy). Governors asked whether students are invited to the Forums. The students said no, but they thought that some departments could benefit from student input – certain problems would be better addressed by someone other than the course teacher.</p> <p>JL added that, in theory there should be a curriculum forum for each course, but if a course has only 10-12 students, different courses will be grouped together (for example, in bricklaying).</p>

ACTION: JL to provide a list of curriculum forums to the Committee. CT to add to Agenda.

Students' Union Annual Report

(the Students' Union Report was circulated in advance)

The students were asked about the high turnover of postholders within the union executive. The problem is that there is no college-wide forum to promote/advertise the posts, which leads to misunderstanding of what the role involves. It is difficult to find the right person for each position. This year, four post-holders have been lost, for various reasons. Cait mentioned that is a normal rate of attrition in student unions.

Elections are being held next week for the SU executive and student governors. They will take office on the first day of the summer term. Governors asked whether this is the optimum timing; the problem is that it favours Level 3 courses - historically, no Level 1 or 2 students have been in post. It was suggested that a post could be added to the Student Executive, which is specifically allocated to a one-year course student.

Action: CO to check the constitution to see whether a 'one-year course' post could be added to the Executive, and report to the committee.

Results of Students Survey

(a preliminary analysis of the Student On Programme Survey 2016 was tabled)

1,376 students responded to the survey. The number of questions was reduced, and they questions were more specific. Level 1 students are most satisfied, and Level 2 students were least satisfied. Red shading is below college average, green is above college average, and amber is at college average. The timing of the survey was not very good, being one week after the Mock Exams.

By subject, the areas of concern are the sciences and the arts. The statement receiving the most negative feedback was 'My teachers treat us all fairly and with respect'. TB drew attention to the Action Plan on page 8; focus groups will be organised for Level 2 groups to interrogate this further. The student survey will be added as an Agenda item for curriculum forums.

The students present were asked to reflect on the survey results. They said their experience depending very much on the individual teacher, but it would be nice to be met with consistently high expectations. The teachers tend to focus on students they think will pass, or who are on the C /D borderline.

Some teachers discourage students from asking questions; the students impression is that these are the weaker teachers who are struggling to maintain control of the classroom. Those weaker teachers also had difficulty handling disruptive students, and frequently treated the whole class worse as a result of difficult behaviour by one or two individuals.

TB noted that the next CPD Day will focus on 'classroom management', and will look at strategies for dealing with disruptive students.

Action: CT to circulate the detailed analysis once published.

5	<p>Discussion Topics</p> <p>(i) <u>Impact of the demolition works</u></p> <p>The students reported that the library move has gone fine. The issue with the demolition has been with only one entrance into the college. Could the second gate be opened? JOS said that cost cutting has resulted in a reduction in the number of commissionaires, and there is not sufficient manpower to man both gates.</p> <p>The SU President has been challenged several times about the lack of lunchtime space for students; particularly since the loss of Glades. The refectory area is too small to accommodate more than a handful of students.</p> <p>Michael Sweetzer has said that the quad is open all year to students, but all present acknowledged that it is too cold at present. The exit to the quad is not well signposted</p> <p>Action: RCx to improve signage to quad.</p> <p>(ii) <u>Learning from mock exams</u></p> <p>The overall feeling of the students was that taking Mock Exams is a worthwhile process. Some points raised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the students is taking A Level Physics, and said that most of his class had got Es and Us in the mock exams. In the post-exam session, the teacher did not show them how to improve their marks, or offer a marking scheme. However, his other subject teachers were better at post-exam analysis. • Insufficient notice of the exams was provided. • For vocational courses, the coursework is not complete, so the timing did not really work. • Generally it was a positive experience. In some subjects (eg. History), they are already used to being tested. In other subjects it felt a bit premature. • It was acceptable to take the exams in the classroom, rather than the Sports Hall. <p>RCx said that notice of the exams was disseminated a month in advance, and the Mocks should also have been discussed in tutorials. JOS added that in 2016/17, the Mocks will be moved to the week before the Christmas break. This allows earlier intervention for students who are underperforming.</p> <p><i>(There was insufficient time to discuss the last two items on the Agenda)</i></p>	
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C	FOR INFORMATION / OTHER	
6	Any other business	

	None.	
7	Future Student Liaison Committee Meetings Wednesday 8 June 2016 The meeting closed at 5.30pm.	

SIGNED: **Date:**

Action Points

Ref	Item	Action	Who?
A	B4	Provide a list of Curriculum Forums to the SL committee	Jeff Lindsey
B	B4	CO to check the Student Union constitution to see whether a 'one-year course' post could be added to the Executive, and report to the committee.	Cait Orton
C	B4	Once the Students Survey has been fully analysed, circulate to SL Committee	Theresa Bray/Clare T
D	B4	Arrange better signage to the quad so that students can make better use of it at lunchtime	Rebecca Courtaux