

## THE SOUTH DOWNS COLLEGE CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting held at 5.45 pm on Thursday 13 November 2008 in the Committee Room

Present: Andrew Turner (Chairman), Frederick Allgood, Richard Andrews, Gwen Blackett, Yvonne Elliott, Stephenie Linham, Laxmi Neave, Michael Oakes (Principal), Philip Robinson, Patricia Thompson, Tony Welch

Apologies: Scott Carless, Rina Khanom, Donna Kinnair

In Attendance: John Manterfield, Clerk to the Corporation  
Susan Grantham, Minuting Secretary

The Chairman welcomed Rob Roberts, Liz Norland, Geoff Norman and Richard Barlow for item 3.

The Principal noted that both student governors were working and therefore unable to attend. He read out a note received from Scott Carless regarding the quality and range of opportunities now available to students in classical studies.

740. Minutes  
(Circulated with the agenda)

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3 July 2008 were AGREED whereupon the Chairman SIGNED the minutes.

741. Presentation on Curriculum Quality Assurance

The Principal introduced the quality assurance team - Rob Roberts, Assistant Principal (Quality in the Curriculum)/Head of Faculty Arts and Science; Liz Norland, Head of Faculty Business and Community; Geoff Norman, Quality Manager; and Richard Barlow, Senior Lecturer (Quality). The College's core business is education, inclusivity and excellent education. Students are central and should have a learning experience of the highest possible quality. The presentation would be looking at the totality of quality assurance across the curriculum. Governors were invited to ask questions and copy slides would be circulated with the minutes.

Rob Roberts emphasised the ethos of inclusivity with excellence and outlined elements of the process of the Self Assessment Report, including the grading system. Members were referred to Quality Curriculum Manual circulated with the agenda, the coloured charts laid around the table and his previous presentation on Value Added. Value Added is an important quality indicator and measures the difference between the projection of what students should achieve based on the GCSEs they arrive with and what students have actually achieved. The better the College performs the higher the line on Chart 1.1 with anything above the yellow area clearly outstanding. Therefore the College can claim to Ofsted that it does an outstanding job with its students. Chart 2.1 (Attitude to the Institution) is a second quality indicator with national averages included in brackets on the right hand side, e.g. 'I would advise others to come here' – 93% (national average 70%). The first three statements represented in red indicate a truly outstanding response; and remaining responses in blue are very good. The tabled charts had been extracted from the 2008 ALIS report independently administered by the University of Durham. He noted there is no room for complacency and the College's job is to maintain the profile.

Geoff Norman leads the teaching mentor team and outlined the mentor's role to support teachers to raise standards to improve students' success. The concept of mentor was explained and the three core themes noted – to support teachers; promote outstanding practice; carry out lesson observations. Currently there are 15 Senior Lecturer Teaching Mentors, including one recently appointed e-learning mentor, supported by 10 assistants, and it was hoped to appoint 5 new people to the team soon. 183 teaching staff had been allocated a mentor this year so far. Developments in the current year included an extensive training options programme in 71 areas, to be repeated each term. Much positive feedback

from mentors was highlighted. Mentoring projects were outlined and the extension to the teaching and learning website with 'frequently asked questions' and the facility for teachers to pose questions and receive feedback from the team. The successful learners project involved gifted and talented students sharing with teachers the strategies they use to make their learning successful. Future plans included extending the influence of the mentoring team to make them more visible and champions for outstanding teaching and learning, and revisiting the successful Teaching and Learning Guide.

Rob Roberts referred members to Page 1, para 4 of the Quality Curriculum Manual. The College has over 5000 students and it is essential to see each one as an individual needing support to make the educational experience a very profitable one. Page 4 referred to higher education and the Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review (IQER) inspection process in which he and Geoff Norman have pivotal roles and an overview is included in the gold coloured appendix. A preparatory meeting had taken place and two academics would be visiting on 27/28 November and again in summer 2010 after which HE inspectors would pronounce the results. Page 9 highlights the College's internal inspection scheme which is as rigorous as Ofsted, and includes external consultants/Ofsted inspectors.

Self Assessment Report – Rob Roberts noted that part-time staff as part of the appraisal programme are also observed and assessed and receive feedback and an action plan. The ten standards for good teaching and learning are given on Page 3. The profiles of all teaching inform the curriculum SAR profile. Each Head of Curriculum meets with curriculum staff, writes a report for their area, meets with the SAR Panel team who scrutinize the report before meeting with the Principal when a grading is pronounced. Members were referred to the table at Page 6 of the extract from the LSC's new Framework for Excellence guide (blue appendix).

Liz Norland outlined the provision of the 16 curriculum areas and the two cross college areas of Key Skills and Additional Support. The enrichment programme within the Sport and Public Services curriculum area completes the College provision. (Slides marked **d** indicate areas developing a new diploma line). In writing Self Assessment Reports, Heads of Curriculum address the 5 Common Inspection Framework questions and include retention and achievement compared with national data. Curriculum examples were given including Areas for Improvement which link to Operational Targets published and reviewed annually. Highlighted examples indicated how real improvement is achieved by focussing on areas for development.

Learners' Voice – Richard Barlow reported the Government focus has moved on personalisation of learning with learners having a say about their education. The role of 'Learners' Voice' had been targeted in the last couple of years, and was now his specific responsibility. He noted his own background as a teacher of A Levels in Politics and a senior lecturer teaching mentor and now Senior Lecturer Quality appointed last year. He outlined the Learner Voice, the College's position of strength, the development plan and developments. Real tangible improvements had been made through meeting and listening to students with an emphasis on learning from differentiation. The self-assessment process is even more informed by learners' views and he had prepared a separate report for the Ofsted inspection last year. The A Level learners survey was now administered on line and responses tripled.

The Chairman thanked Rob Roberts and his team for a brilliant and informative presentation representing excellent practice.

In response to questions by governors, the very important part that part-time staff play and their wealth of professional expertise was highlighted. These staff members are paid development rate to attend meetings and attendance is very high. Lecturers are encouraged to take students to offsite vocational visits. It was noted that the ALIS survey is one snapshot done annually but the College also tests throughout the year. Philip Robinson considered the very impressive presentation made clear why the College has an excellent reputation.

[Philip Robinson left the meeting at 7.00 pm]

The presentation was RECEIVED with thanks.

742. Search Committee

The Chairman reported that the Committee had met earlier in the evening to consider a suggestion from Havant Borough Council that Cllr Mrs Caren Tarrant be appointed to the Corporation. The Committee proposed to invite her to meet with the Principal for a discussion in order to report back to the Search Committee.

On the proposal of the Chairman, and on the recommendation of the Search Committee (13 November 2008), it was AGREED unanimously that Cllr Caren Tarrant be invited to meet with the Principal prior to a recommendation being made to the Corporation.

743. Corporation Membership

The Clerk noted that the terms of office of Donna Kinnair and Tony Welch were shortly due to expire and both members had indicated their willingness to continue.

On the proposal of Patricia Thompson, seconded by Stephenie Linham, it was AGREED unanimously that:

- (i) Donna Kinnair be re-appointed to the Corporation under Clause 2(1)(a) of the Instrument of Government for a period of 4 years until 15 November 2012.
- (ii) Tony Welch be re-appointed to the Corporation under Clause 2(1)(a) of the Instrument of Government for a period of 4 years until 5 December 2012.

744. Committee Membership

The Clerk further noted that committee terms of office in respect of Richard Andrews and Yvonne Elliott were shortly due to expire.

On the proposal of Tony Welch, seconded by Gwen Blackett, the following re-appointments were AGREED unanimously:

- (i) Richard Andrews as a member and chair of the Premises Committee for a period of two years until 14 November 2010.
- (ii) Yvonne Elliott as a member of the Audit Committee for a period of two years until 15 November 2010.

745. Academic Board

(Doc.C08/25 was circulated with the agenda)

The Principal highlighted two developments in College provision. The College would be offering diplomas in five curriculum areas from September 2009 in Engineering; Hospitality and Catering; ICT; Creative and Media; and Business, Administration and Finance. The government's original plan was to have 50,000 students studying the new diploma in the current academic year, whereas in actuality figures were between 10,000 and 12,000. As Chair of the Havant 14-19 Consortium he reported extremely good progress was being made but not a single genuine enquiry had been made about the diplomas commencing September 2009 at the College's October Open Evenings. Potentially the diplomas offered a very interesting course and much work was being developed for 2009 and for an increased offering from September 2010. He considered that ultimately the learner voice and student choice would determine their success.

The College would be supporting apprenticeships 16-18 and at a meeting earlier in the afternoon the LSC agreed to fund everything the College wishes to offer. Adult enrolment was up by 5-6% already for the year. There was still much to do to increase adult enrolment and this provision would be hard hit by the credit crunch. The College was developing the

work-based learning programme and adult courses and a new brochure was being published for courses starting in January.

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2008 were RECEIVED.

746. Premises Committee  
(Doc.C08/26 was circulated with the agenda)

Richard Andrews noted that the meeting had taken place in the Boeing 747 cabin and he commended the enthusiasm of the crew. The account for the North West Building Phase I was being finalised and contractors were now on site for the North West Building Phase II. Attention was drawn to the LSC Energy Saving Project with reference not only to the College's carbon footprint but also fantastic savings being made from very little investment and he hoped that more projects may follow.

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2008 were RECEIVED.

747. Standards and Quality Committee

(i) Minutes  
(Doc.C08/27 was circulated on 10 November 2008)

The Chairman introduced the minutes noting that lengthy and rigorous discussions had taken place about examination results right across the College at all levels. The Committee had been robust in asking the College to justify their present position and explain the figures in detail. They were particularly pleased to learn from the Principal there were no resource issues and of the focus to improve on all areas. Retention and achievement data had been scrutinized and the higher education destinations had provoked interesting debate. The number of students attending local destinations was primarily the cause of finance issues. The Committee also discussed the role of excellent students and opportunities for them to progress to the top universities. The Corporation would be discussing the College's Quality Strategy later in the meeting.

In response to Freddie Allgood the Chairman noted that the Committee had been saddened to learn of the difficulties students face of being accepted by Oxbridge and Cambridge and the unwillingness of these institutions to consider students who may have reasons for not having done incredibly well at GCSE. London Colleges are far more willing to take students from different backgrounds. The Principal elaborated on the tutor admissions process. He noted the potential waste and that these institutions do not reflect the society they ought to represent. Broadly speaking children from a middle class professional family have an 80% chance of going onto university, whereas a child of a manual worker has a 11% chance.

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2008 were RECEIVED.

(ii) Quality Strategy  
(Doc.C08/28 was circulated with the agenda)

The Chairman noted the Corporation's responsibility for approving the quality strategy under the revised Articles of Government 2007, which came into force January 2008.

Members commended the College's rigorous annual cycle of quality assurance as contained in the Curriculum Quality Manual and outlined in the presentation by the quality assurance team earlier in the meeting.

On the proposal of Tony Welch, seconded by Gwen Blackett, the College's Quality Strategy, as outlined in the presentation at this meeting and detailed in the Curriculum Quality Manual (Doc. C08/28) and updated annually was AGREED.

748. Monitoring of College's Statutory Duty (Education Act 2002) to safeguard and promote the welfare of young people under 18 and vulnerable adults  
(Doc.C08/29 was circulated with the agenda)

The College Secretary noted the report followed a similar format as in previous years. Clear procedures are in place for young persons and vulnerable adults. The College liaises very closely with Hampshire Children's Services and Adult Services and Hampshire Police. Guidelines are in place for preventing bullying and ensuring the treatment of sickness of students with nurses on site. Procedures for the employment of staff include CRB checks. The report is reviewed on an annual basis.

Stephenie Linham advised updated procedures were in the process of being rolled out which include the requirement for all governors to be CRB checked. The College Secretary noted a number of governors were already CRB checked and he would be inviting others to bring in their documentation to enable CRB checks to be made.

In response to Richard Andrews the College Secretary advised that a handful of instances of bullying had been dealt with by the College. Where instances of cyber bullying take place outside of the College, e.g. on websites such as Facebook, are brought to the College's attention, the incidents are investigated and disciplinary action taken. Yvonne Elliott noted that bullying is the subject of discussions with students under the headings of 'learner voice' and Every Student Matters and posters are widely displayed around the College. It is not a huge problem and appropriately dealt with.

Responding to Gwen Blackett, the Principal noted that some 1600-1700 students across the College receive additional learning support, for example for Dyslexia; additionally there are some 400 students with a severe learning difficulty mainly in the curriculum area of Foundations for Learning – full and part-time students.

The report was RECEIVED.

749. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was CONFIRMED as Thursday 11 December 2008 at 5.45 pm.

750. Any Other Business

Quality Assurance Presentation - The Chairman requested the Principal to express governors' thanks to Rob Roberts and his team for an excellent presentation.

College Brochures – Classical Civilisation; Humanities (as laid around the table) Tony Welch noted the two superb pamphlets.

[The meeting was declared closed at 7.32.pm]

[Slides from the Quality Assurance presentation are attached]