



NEWHAM COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

STUDENT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

Notes of the meeting held on 10th February 2016

Present:

Students: 38 students attended.

Governors:	Linda Jordan	Chair
	Di Gowland	Principal
	Andrew Edwards	Governor

Staff:	Beryl Hughes	Interim Clerk to the Corporation
	Sean McGarrigle	Director, Estates and Facilities Management
	Annette Cast	Deputy Principal – PQI
	Anil Nagpal	Deputy Principal Finance & Infrastructure
	Simeon Gibbons	
	Liam Davis	Student & Staff Liaison Officer
	Steve Parry	Head of IT
	Olivia Besly	Head of HR & Legal Services
	David Dixon	Estates and Facilities

Apologies: Mary Herbert

1. Introduction

The Chair welcomed the attendees and all the staff and governors present introduced themselves. Chair explained that the purpose of this forum was to discuss issues of common interest as well as general concerns and that the meeting served as a direct line to the governors and the College management.

As there was an open agenda for the meeting, the Chair invited students to talk about issues that they wanted to bring to the attention of senior staff and Governors.

Before the meeting was opened to the students AE asked if the students present were on the voting register and encouraged them to register and vote

Some students said they were on the register but the majority did not respond

2. Matters arising

- There were no matters arising from the previous notes.

3. Issues raised by students

i. ESOL - funding

- A second year ESOL student raised concerns about the recently introduced fee for studying ESOL.

Response:

- It was explained that the new fee for ESOL courses was a direct result of cuts in Government funding for adults. The college had to make the difficult choice of charging for ESOL evening class provision in order to continue with this deliver. ESOL day courses are not charged
- SG apologised as students should have received information about the changes and he will ensure clear communication is available across the college.
- Students were reminded that learning support funding is available if students are experiencing financial problems and everyone was encouraged to apply for this funding if needed. This included funding available through the college charity the Learning Revolution Trust who may be able to assist with a one-off bursary.

ii. ESOL – crèche facilities

- Student said she could not afford childcare

Response:

- An application should be made to the learner support fund
- If students are unsure about how to apply assistance can be sought from staff at:
 - East Ham Campus room 113
 - Stratford Campus room D003

iii. ESOL – compliment

- An ESOL student said:
 - The course is good
 - Everyone is on time
 - Teaching is good
 - Timetable is good

iv. MOTOR VEHICLES

- The level 3 Motor Vehicle course students do not have enough vehicles to work on

Response:

- College staff agreed to look into this issue

v. BEHAVIOUR OF PRE-16 STUDENTS

- The student governor raised concerns about the bad behaviour of students and is the college a suitable place for them

Response:

- The college staff aim to manage poor behaviour on a case by case basis and if students do not respond then there are a number of channels which can be explored to support improvement. If these are ineffective then more significant actions such as temporary or permanent exclusion will be considered.
- The expectation is that everyone should strive to achieve good behaviour at all times in the college.
- If students are concerned about class room behaviour issues which are not being addressed they should raise it student reps meetings.

vi. CONSTRUCTION - compliment

- A student offered thanks to the college that students and staff had improved.

vii.IT LEVEL 1

- PCs take a long time to log in.
- A different password is needed to log on to new learning
- The Digital Skills Solutions (DSS) learning centre system does not link to the college system

Response:

- IT are aware of the slow running and are trying to improve.
- DSS systems are separate from college systems at this time though closer integration is being reviewed/
- The password resets will be checked.

viii. TOURISM

- There are insufficient PCs available for students on the Digital Skills course.
- Students need to have a PC each and not to share.

Response:

- The issue will be investigated.

ix. FLEX

- A student asked if a book required to assist him with his studies could be acquired for him as it is not in the FLEX

Response:

- SG suggested that if the name the book is supplied it will be acquired by the FLEX
- SG suggested an application be made to the learner support fund.
- Funds received from the fund can be used for whatever a student needs, including books.
- The learner support fund is available to 24+ students with a loan.
- AE said feedback on the FLEX would be welcomed

x. ENRICHMENT

- Students would like a wide range of sports activities to be available.
- A Level 1 Humanities student raised that since September timetabling had hindered opportunities for preferred enrichment activities.

Response:

- LD will welcome suggestions to expand enrichment although cautioned that due to timetabling issues not all students preferences could be met
- Some sports already available are:
 - Table tennis
 - Karate
 - Boxercise
 - Football
 - Cricket
 -

xi. CANTEEN

- There is congestion in the canteen which makes it difficult for RISE students especially when older students queue jump
- Students complimented the college on the improvement of quality and selection of food available.

Response:

- AC responded that RISE students should have their own separate food area and that this would be introduced and that security staff would monitor the queues.

xii. WI-FI

- Complaint about the unreliability of Wi-Fi

Response:

- SP acknowledged wi-fi was unstable at SC
- There is a project underway to improve the wi-fi at both campuses
- When wi-fi was originally installed the capability was to support staff only.
- The upgrade is to support staff and students
- The upgrade will take about three months

Students were reassured that their queries and complaints were taken very seriously and followed up by the relevant departments.

Students are kept up to date with information by text, email and notice boards and it is essential that students keep their contact details up to date.

The Chair was impressed by the high attendance and would like to see the number of attendees to continue to grow.

The Chair thanked the students for their questions and comments and encouraged them to raise day-to-day issues or concerns with their faculty managers or through the official customer complaints system.

**4. Date of the next meeting
....., East Ham Campus**