



NEWHAM COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION
STUDENT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

Notes of the meeting held on 2 November 2016

Present:

Students: 24 students attended.

Governors: Linda Jordan Chair

Staff:	Beryl Hughes	Interim Clerk to the Corporation
	Annette Cast	Deputy Principal – PQI
	Anil Nagpal	Deputy Principal Finance & Infrastructure
	Carlos Cubillo-Barsi	Vice Principal
	Olivia Besly	Head of HR & Legal Services
	Simeon Gibbons	Registrar
	Danielle Giles	Sport Development officer
	Jaswinder Dhanota	Capita IT Services
	Angelina Ikeako	Student support and Staff Governor

Apologies: Andrew Edwards and Mary Herbert

1. Introduction

LJ welcomed the attendees and the staff 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, LJ invited students to talk about issues that they wanted to bring to the attention of senior staff and Governors.

2. Matters arising

- There were no matters arising from the previous notes.

3. Issues by students

The new student president introduced himself and raised the following issues:

- i. Wi fi is slow at Stratford Campus**
- ii. Log in is slow**
- iii. The lift at Stratford Campus is dirty**
- iv. The free lunch timing is too late**

Response:

i.

- The Wi fi was upgraded at East Ham with Samsung Wi fi.
- New access points are being installed at Stratford Campus
- The work is extensive and will take time to complete
- There is continual investment in Wi fi

ii.

- The PCs are old windows 7
- College is looking at investing in new PCs
- A refresh programme will be prioritised

iii.

- There is a lift refurbishment programme
- The cleaning of the lift will be checked
- The lift is for people with reduced mobility and everyone is encouraged to take the stairs when possible

iv.

- The refectory opening time will be checked with a view to reverting to opening at 11.30
- Earlier opening will reduce congestion

5. LESSONS TOO LONG

- Students feel that English, maths and stats lessons of three hour duration each are too long as they cannot concentrate for three hours

Response:

- The lesson pattern was changed because students were not attending the second lesson.
- Attendance equals success

6. HEATING

- Learning waves at East Ham is cold as there is no heating in there

Response:

- Temporary heating will be put in

7. BLINDS

- Window blinds in rooms on the 3rd, 4th and 5th floors at East Ham Campus need repairing as they cannot be closed to shut out light and glare.

Response:

- Estates will be asked to repair

8. CATERING

- Coffee shop too expensive
- Not enough of a selection for free lunches
- Queues are too long
- There should be signs easily visible to show what is available at the refectory servery
- There should be vending machines for hot drinks and snacks to accommodate students at evening classes
- Not enough water coolers

Response

- Catering comments will be looked at
- The refectories will open from 11.30 until 2
- There are accessible vending machines and arrangements will be made to ensure they are suitably stocked.

9. CHAIRS

- Chairs in the Samsung academy and English and maths classes are uncomfortable.

Response

- Chairs are acceptable to staff and students

A student peer commented money can only be spent once and heating would be the priority and the chairs are comfortable enough

10. FIRE DRILLS

- Students should be told when there is going to be an evacuation

Response

- There cannot be advance notice of a fire drill as the purpose is to ensure everyone evacuates smoothly in the event of an incident.
- Full test evacuations take place twice a year.
- The fire alarms are tested weekly at both campuses at 4.30 on a Wednesday and they are publicised

11. EVENTS

- Events should be publicised as students do not know they are taking place

Response

- Events are publicised on New Learning, posters, screens etc.
- Students are encouraged to ensure they update their contact details when necessary including mobile phone number. That can be done at the Help Point

12. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- Parent reluctant to supply personal financial information

Response

- The college is restricted by government regulations on funding
- A means test is necessary to prove hardship
- The learner support fund can provide funds for books, travel etc.

13. TEACHING

- There are not enough teachers in engineering and the quality is bad
- Experiments in Science lessons are too difficult and when questions are asked the teachers cannot answer them

Response

- Advertisements are out for permanent lecturers

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.

Chair asked if the meeting could end with some positive comments

Response from the forum

- Staff are helpful and friendly
- Free breakfasts are good
- It is good to have a free lunch
- The free use of the gym is enjoyed

- 4. Date of the next meeting**
8 February 2017 - East Ham Campus