College Review User Group Experience and Feedback

These notes are based on what is recorded, and agreed, in the minutes of User Group meetings re the experience of two colleges who started using College Review in February 2006.

The representatives of the Colleges below have each offered to provide advice and guidance to Colleges that are starting to use College Review or are considering its use in their College.

Contact details:

Gloscat	Jane Durant	Quality Manager	01242 532102	jane.durant@gloscat.ac.uk
Bournemouth and Poole College	Chris Birkhead	Quality Manager	01202 205458	birkheadc@bpc.ac.uk

The experience of each of these Colleges in using the different features of College Review is as follows:

Gloscat
Gloscat started using College Review in February 2006
Jane Durant, Quality Manager, advises that Gloscat have concentrated on using and deploying the College Review balanced scorecard framework across the College.

To date Jane advises that:
- they developed a customised scorecard template for course teams and this has been deployed to all course teams, both full time and part time;
- currently, 'green' scorecard targets have been set at 'top 10%' performance levels with 'red' targets being 10% lower;
- 1 hour training sessions had been provided for all managers who would cascade training to their course teams. Some managers had done this with the help of central training support others had used the guides provided. It was felt that teams who had pulled all staff together to work on their scorecards at the same time with central back up had been more successful;
- everyone is now using what is seen as a successful model and are producing their current scorecard against target;
- they have tested the Observe program which supports lesson observation with a number of observers.

In terms of outputs from this major change in managing course performance Jane advises that:
- the key outcome had been the ability to group course team scorecards together where the spreadsheets are seen as 'brilliant'. A single spreadsheet has been produced to compare over 300 courses which had proved the ability of the software;
- managers like the ability to slice the course constituency in various ways and analyse performance from the resultant spread sheets;
- spreadsheets for course teams in departments can feed department SARs;
- highlighting the problem that teams do not go back as much as they should to evidence sources is improving discipline in this area;
- scorecards are being extensively used for performance reviews;
- the traffic lights measurement principle is now being used extensively in the College;
- the outputs available from the scorecard framework are proving very useful for validation and co-ordination;
- the bigger picture is proving far easier to identify with courses with 75% retention, or less, being able to be 'red flagged';
- Observe, the lesson observation program, has attractive features.

In summary Jane advises that
- ♦ the introduction of course team performance management using scorecard is now driving course control and risk management re courses;
- ♦ the whole process is helping to ensure that the quality and consistency of programmes, which is a major SAR issue, is being addressed;
- ♦ training/ support needs re course performance are being better identified;
- ♦ use of the scorecard feature in College Review has really opened up the way forward and is helping to drive forward the College's strategic improvement goals;
- ♦ the new software feature to identify SAR Points in the scorecard feature will prove very useful in compiling the SAR at the end of 2007.

On reflection Jane advises that failure to adopt this approach at the beginning of 2006 would have meant that
- ♦ course teams would not have been able to move to working to Key Performance Indicator targets;
- ♦ the detailed course control, the sharper approach and clarity of the position that is now evident would not be in place;

For the future Jane advises that using the scorecard approach at individual level is an option that will be explored.

Bournemouth and Poole College
Bournemouth and Poole College started using College Review in March 2006
Chris Birkhead, Quality Manager, advises that Bournemouth and Poole College have only used the scorecard feature.

To date Chris advises that
- ♦ the scorecard template for full time course teams was been developed with consultation;
- ♦ the scorecard report format showing objectives and targets was circulated;
- ♦ currently, 'green' targets are national average performance figures with 'red' targets being 6% lower';
- ♦ the scorecard was finalised by the Teaching and Learning Group;
- ♦ at least 120 people attended a series of 1 hour training sessions towards the end of the summer term (thanks to Jane Durant of Gloscat for guidance);
- ♦ the scorecard was deployed to every full time course and most substantial part time courses at the end of the 05/06 academic year with some courses being revisited early in the 06/07 academic year;
- ♦ scorecard files are being saved centrally, which is working well;

In terms of outputs Chris advises that:
- ♦ results to date had enabled some comparative reports to be produced using the software and these were proving extremely useful;
- ♦ more comparative reports would be used in the future for analytical purposes;
- ♦ a future objective is to sharpen 'green' targets for higher performing courses;
- ♦ most feedback has been good;
- ♦ the ability to see measured performance against target on a 'traffic light' basis was now being seen as a real benefit;
- ♦ the rigour of the scorecard approach is driving the improvement of processes.

For the future Chris advises that the scorecard approach will be extended to all part time courses for the 2007/ 2008 academic year.

Regarding self-assessment Chris advised that the College were still using their existing self-assessment process

Regarding IT Chris advised that the IT support had been fine.