

MOULTON COLLEGE

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 3rd June 2019

Present: Mr A Thomson (in the Chair), Mr A Eastland, Mrs P Hawkesford, Mr L Howarth, Mr D McVean and Ms A Turner

In attendance: Mr M Edwards, Mrs G M Hulley, Mrs J Matthews and Mr M Simmons

PART 1

19/30 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs K Delamain-Blunt and Mr B Hansford.

Mr M Edwards was welcomed to the Committee in his role as Head of Higher Education (HE).

19/31 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)

There were no declarations of interest

19/32 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 26th March 2019 were approved as a true and accurate record.

19/33 Matters arising (Agenda item 3a)

There were no matters arising.

19/34 Actions outstanding (Agenda item 4, Paper B)

18/43, Curriculum Performance 2017-18 Higher Education (HE):

In October 2018, a member of the Committee had asked for some metrics to be developed to measure the impact of support and also learners' progression towards independent learning in HE. A paper had been prepared by the HE Co-ordinator which confirmed that metrics on use and impact were difficult to define. Anecdotally, students generally accessed greater support at the beginning of their course which then tailored off. Support was then often resumed when a new skill was required such as the production of a dissertation. In response to a question from the Committee of the need to be more forensic at the start, middle and end of the learners' journey, members were informed of a number of actions that had been taken by the team to be more productive to identify a need whether a student was declaring it or not. The HE Co-ordinator currently sat in on study sessions to track which learners needed support. In addition, the team was more proactive to help learners engage with the support services. This included those learners who may not be eligible for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) who do not declare that they have a problem. (Closed)

19/19, Matters arising: Education Inspection Framework:

The Link Governor for Quality provided a summary of the proposed changes to the education inspection framework which would be implemented from September 2019. Key points included a focus on Ofsted looking at the educational intent on the part of senior and subject leaders in terms of how the curriculum was designed to build skills in a hierarchical manner,

behaviour and knowledge. There would be a greater focus on the impact of the curriculum with an emphasis on progress and destination data.

The Chair of Committee questioned the steps that had been taken by the College to prepare for this new framework. The Director of Curriculum and Quality Improvement had attended a number of briefings. Staff had also been made aware of the changes. Attendance at further briefings were also planned.

The Committee emphasised the risk that these changes posed to the College. Clear route maps would be required for each curriculum or subject area. It was important that such route maps were prepared and as such, a question was raised about the capacity and levels of investment that were needed to deliver. This was also queried in the context of the Education and Skills Funding Agency who had commented on the need for a greater sense of urgency to the actions being taken. The latest version of the quality improvement plan included planned strategies and associated actions. There was a need to prioritise those actions and the planned meetings at Senior Leadership Team (SLT) level would be imperative to agree those priorities. The Committee confirmed that it was now imperative that there was a sense of urgency and demonstration of the actions being completed.

All other items were either progressing in line with agreed deadlines or were subject to discussion as part of an agenda item.

19/35 Meeting dates (Agenda item 5, Paper C)

The meeting dates for 2019-20 were approved.

19/36 Annual Cycle of Business (Agenda item 6, Paper D)

19/37 Terms of reference (Agenda item 7, Paper E)

Both agenda items were taken together. At the last meeting of the Search and Governance Committee, a review of each Committees' terms of reference had led to the agreement that there should be a much greater emphasis upon risk management and monitoring of key performance indicators. The terms of reference had been updated to reflect recommendations from the Search and Governance Committee. Further recommendations for amendments centred around the following:

- Further Education (FE) and HE needed separating so that HE requirements were overtly stated. This would also support the expectation that governors would scrutinise the Access and Participation Plan. This would be addressed in Section 4: Monitoring the College's capacity to improve.
- Section 2: Curriculum – it was important for governors to understand the full meaning of what was meant by curriculum and that it would extend beyond quality. This was particularly relevant in the context of the changes to the external inspection framework where governors would be held more accountable at the next inspection.
- Purpose: The sentence starting, 'to advise on strategies to exceed expectations' should be changed to say, 'to advise on how learning is planned and delivered in its fullest sense.'
- With the inclusion of Careers, Advice and Guidance in Section 9, it would be important for the Committee to have sight of relevant data in order to scrutinise and challenge this area of work.

- The Annual Business Cycle should be updated to ensure that:
 - The Committee was providing the same level of scrutiny and challenge to HE as it would be for other aspects of the College's provision.
 - Position statements had been received and considered by the Committee in a timely way in preparation for any Ofsted visits (monitoring or inspection).

Following discussion, *the terms of reference were recommended for approval to the Corporation.*

19/38

Link Governor Scheme (Agenda item 8, Paper F)

Following the last meeting of the TLA Committee, it had been agreed that the current Scheme could be further enhanced. The Scheme protocol had been changed so that the Link Governor for Quality would complete a visit at the start of the autumn and spring term. Both visits would generate a number of key questions that other link governors could ask during their programme or thematic visits. The questions would offer opportunities for governors to ask about the strategy for managing issues that learners (or staff), had raised. The questions were not intended to explore any operational issues which would be outside of the remit of the governors. The Committee agreed the proposed changes to the Scheme. Further feedback included:

- Following a visit, governors should be invited to offer 'at least' one example of impact.
- The Corporation would have a second student governor from September 2019 and this would provide more opportunities to gather feedback from other learners.
- Further promotion of the work of governors was required to ensure staff and students had a better understanding of their roles and to become more visible. Several ideas were discussed including, 'Meet the Board' days for staff and governors; the planned SAR validation in November 2019 would be an opportunity for staff to meet governors; a page could be created on Moodle and the staff intranet; and, a governor should be invited to the HE association.
- A wider discussion was held around other members of the Corporation taking part in the Scheme. Further discussion was required to share this thinking with other governors. There were opportunities for Link Governors of: Enterprise/Commerciality; Food and Drink; Support Staff; and, Employer.

Following discussion, *the report was approved.*

19/39

Ofsted feedback (Agenda item 9)

The College had just received a draft copy of the Ofsted inspection report for factual accuracy. Inspection grades remained as previously reported. The College would query some areas in the report. The Principal provided a summary of the key areas of improvement and strengths that were outlined in the report. It was most likely that the report would be published on the Ofsted website within the next few days. A press release would be circulated the next day confirming the appointment of Corrie Harris as Principal. Corrie's experience to date would mean she was experienced to build on the work of the current Principal. A communication strategy would also be circulated to all staff. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

Quality Performance Health-check Report (Agenda item 10, Paper F)

The report included a quantitative and qualitative summary and analysis of in-year data for FE (Further Education), Apprenticeships and HE (Higher Education) performance. There had been a slight deterioration in the RAG ratings since the last report. Some areas had received amber/red ratings. Learner views across the College remained inconsistent. There were some discrepancies between the results from FE Choices and feedback from the recent Ofsted inspection. One area was green. Members were informed of specific examples of in-year progress being made, for example, with FE learner retention for 19+ students and Sport.

Questions from governors:

- a. Where the downward trend is concerned, we thought the agreed actions were going to deliver. They are clearly not delivering at the moment. I'd like to know if we have chosen the wrong actions, or something else? *The College has some real legacy problems in FE and HE. There were significant swathes of students (in the previous regime) who moved up a year without a proper assessment. This has had an impact on behaviour and attendance. The other two factors relates to 50% of the teaching staff being new to the College; the a reliance on agency staff whilst we recruited permanent staff; and, curriculum managers who are new in post; and, the expectation that they would make quick and significant progress was challenging. Closer analysis of the 'in-year trend' ratings in the report identified some errors. It was agreed that these should be reviewed and the necessary changes made to the report.*
- b. How certain are we that we will not make the same mistake next year? *There is a much more robust management approach to reviewing progression forms. The VP Curriculum and Dean of HE has reviewed every form. The College has introduced some curriculum reforms to offer better routes of progression to those who cannot necessarily jump to the next level.*
- c. How much time is spent helping young people progress from one level to the next to develop study skills so that they are well prepared to go onto level 3? How much time is spent ensuring people have the skills to learn as well as content which they need to learn as part of the syllabus? *For those students who are naturally motivated, their skills will be developed further whilst they are with us in order to progress to the next level. Timetables for this year are historical. For those learners requiring more help, we will be doing much more with the 'learning to learn' agenda. We are mindful that not enough time has been given to this previously and timetables for 2019-20 will reflect this priority.*
- d. In terms of attendance, I would like to be able to complete a more forensic approach which would include a more detailed look at some of the protected characteristics. I would certainly like a more detailed look at LLDD and high needs at a future meeting? *One of the reasons for putting pastoral support officers (PSOs) and a community support officer (CSO) in post was to support attendance. Their impact has not been measurable this term and will not be seen until September 2019. We have been looking at the breakdown of learners Entry 1 and Entry 2 and the need to make sure they get to class on time. The College has a big campus and it is important we have the right strategies in place to ensure students attend. We must also not overlook the importance of a positive student experience in the classroom and the impact on attendance.*

Following discussion, *the report was received*.

19/41

Quality Improvement Plan 2018-19 (Agenda item 11, Paper G)

The report was outlined and discussed. This was a first draft following the Ofsted inspection and was still subject to validation by the SLT. Work had commenced on taking previous feedback into account in relation to the report to show more clearly what progress had been made against milestones when the dates were some time in the future. Milestone dates now included feedback on progress and details of what the impact had been as a result of the action(s) taken.

Questions from governors:

- a. I had interpreted the impact line in terms of what difference had the action made to student achievement. Is this correct? *No, it is about the impact of the action taken. If we think of the OfS, their interest is very much concentrated on outcomes rather than inputs, activities or outputs.*
- b. I like the way in which the QIP shows progress, impact and milestones. Where the actions around observations are concerned, they seem to be about things that the teacher does. There is very little on how well learning is going to be evaluated and whether people are being challenged. There is a need to put a bit more about what is being learnt; how well people are being stretched and how people are being developed of skills and behaviours? *We need to do more work on defining our definitive progress measures. We think the six areas in this section would demonstrate that we are really making progress. We still need to do some more work on this to tease out what the managers, teachers, LSAs and learners need to know. There is then a shared understanding of 'when it is working, this is what it looks like'.*

In response to a question from the Chair about next steps, the Committee was informed that the QIP was subject to agreement from the individuals who had actions against them. The SLT also needed to review the content. The Board would receive an updated version at its next meeting in July 2019. Following discussion, *the report was received*.

19/42

Curriculum Plan and Contribution Analysis (Agenda item 12, Paper H)

The contribution model had been produced using in-year funding and income, achieved and projected, together with the annual budget. The paper summarised the overall findings of the contribution model and indicated where College management would focus to achieve greater efficiencies whilst maintaining quality. There was an inevitable degree of variation in the contribution to overheads that different areas of curriculum make, reflecting different group sizes, income potential and a combination of direct and indirect delivery costs. Of these, the cost of delivery and group sizes were the most important factors in determining contribution levels. Given the need for the College to grow and to develop its portfolios, the SLT was minded that the available data was a tool to focus attention rather than a blunt and primary instrument to make decisions about viability.

The Committee welcomed the report commenting that it helped to increase confidence with the planning process. The SLT was asked to consider whether the College needed to set a minimum threshold for course viability as a baseline. Members also agreed a copy of the report should be shared with the Finance and Resources Committee. Following discussion, *the report was noted*.

19/43

OTLA progress update (Agenda item 13, Paper I)

The Committee was informed that as a result of the Ofsted inspection and previous monitoring visit in November 2018, all teaching staff had been observed. Feedback had been given to all staff where Moulton staff had accompanied Ofsted inspectors. Where the internal observation process was concerned, 68% of teaching staff had been formally observed from the process. Colleagues from Abingdon and Witney College had been carrying out in-class support as part of the Strategic College Improvement Fund bid. Learning walks had been completed together with feedback. A number of staff were still on probation and each had received informal observations. This had to be undertaken prior to a formal observation which must be completed before any probation sign-off. A grid had been completed following the Ofsted inspection to show an analysis of findings from both types of observation. The inspection had given a clear steer as to where efforts needed to be directed for training and the observation process.

Questions from governors:

- a. I agree that the inspection has given a clear steer for direction of observation and training. Is the CPD training on a Monday afternoon still continuing? *Yes, there is a complimentary CPD programme but this was not reflected in the report.*
- b. I like the format. It is helpful to see. How often do you expect to do this report and how often do you feel it would be appropriate to bring it back here? *It would come to each meeting of this Committee.*
- c. One area I could not see, high needs students. Is that another area that needs to be prised out? *This is something we can incorporate into our observations.*
- d. Are students given an opportunity to feedback on the observation so you can see both sides? *We wouldn't stop a lesson but would encourage observers to speak to students.*

Following discussion, the report was noted.

19/44

Safeguarding (Agenda item 14)

a) College report

b) Governor champion (Paper J)

The Committee agreed that the College report had been subject to detailed scrutiny at the Corporation meeting on the 9th May 2019. No further questions were raised by members. The Governor champion had circulated a written report prior to the meeting. The VP Curriculum and Dean of HE who chaired the Safeguarding meetings on behalf of the College confirmed that the report reflected some of the points that had been raised at the last Safeguarding meeting. All members of that committee appreciated the presence of the Governor champion and that his contributions were very much valued. Following discussion, *the reports were noted.*

19/45

Student Voice (Agenda item 15, Paper K)

The report was outlined and discussed. The FE Choices Survey was a national survey which learners and apprentices were asked to complete each year. The survey included a variety of questions concerning a range of issues. Throughout 2018-19, 435 learners/apprentices had participated in the survey. Almost a third of the responses were disqualified as a result of students omitting certain questions. The overall satisfaction rate had changed little over the past 3 years.

Questions from governors:

- a. Did this include students on the courses that are delivered under licence? *This needed to be clarified. The Committee recommended these learners should be included in future surveys if it was found that they had not taken part.*
- b. What training is required for curriculum leaders? *The survey is easy to access by learners and it can be accessed during an agreed period from the end of November. The survey can be completed in a tutorial session. Students need sufficient time to complete the survey as well as support with any questions that are not understood.*
- c. Has usage of FE choices gone up? *It has gone down every year.*
- d. How do managers get students' input about what is working or not working? *We have our own internal mechanism for capturing learner voice with additional, more detailed surveys, student representative meetings, etc. The Student Governor attends the student representative meetings. We do have to be careful to avoid 'survey fatigue' with the students.*
- e. We have to use that internal system to make a real impact. If learners understand that they are listened to and if they always knew what they put in the survey led to actions to improve, this might make it more relevant than filling in a survey because they are sitting in a tutorial?

19/46**Student destinations (Agenda item 16, Paper L)**

The report was outlined and discussed. From an initial review of the report when it was first received, the general view of the findings in relation to destinations was quite positive. Members' attention was drawn to the very positive responses associated with respondents' views on benefits of the course. The company that did this report would be completing some additional work around benchmarks later in the summer. The report was shared with Ofsted during the inspection. Two points were made about how the report could be further improved around destinations. This included the number of students who moved from one level to another and, whether students were progressing or moving sideways. However, when we showed this to Ofsted who said from a destination point of view, we need to be bringing here how many of our students moved from one level to another level and whether students were progressing or moving sideways. The Committee welcomed the report and agreed it was a very helpful report that benefited from being independent. It was agreed that there were findings within the report that provided a strong narrative to build on for the future. Destination data was something that needed to be focused on and examples could be used in the marketing plan. Following discussion, the report was noted.

19/47**HE Action Plan (Agenda item 17, Paper M)**

The Head of HE provided a progress update for HE and outlined the planned direction of travel. In-year withdrawals to date were confirmed. The report included a table showing a breakdown of the different reasons for students withdrawing from their courses. Evidence was also supplied to the Committee on the use of unconditional offers used in the previous year. This decision had been subject to some debate previously and now that the Committee had evidence to demonstrate the negative impact upon achievement, it was agreed that for 2019-20, unconditional offers would not be made. More acceptances had been received for 2019-20 but conversion to acceptances would not be known until later in the year. In terms of moving forwards, the

Committee noted that the student association was now up and running. The level of support for students would be improved through a number of actions. Agency staff were no longer used.

The Committee welcomed the report and acknowledged the amount of work that was required for the College to return to its previous position with HE. It would be important for the Committee to receive regular information updates in relation to: marketing; outcomes from QAA (Quality Assurance Agency for HE) reviews; use of alumni to promote the College's offer; income generation; and, feedback from students on their experiences at the College. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

19/48 Office for Students: Access and Participation Plan (Agenda item 18, paper N)

The latest version of the report had been circulated previously. Although some sections were still incomplete, these would be finished by the agreed deadline. Members were invited to send specific feedback to the VP Curriculum and Dean of HE. A number of prompts were shared with members to focus attention on key areas around credibility of the plan; coherence and consistency; measures were being taken to tackle inequality; and, objectivity and evidence-based.

Questions from governors:

- a. In terms of the layout and structure, the explanation of 'how' something will be achieved is not explained until much later in the section.
- b. The diagnosis of the College's situation is fine but it is now clear of how the College will reach a certain point. The APP currently lacks specificity and would benefit from concrete examples. I also wonder if there is space in the APP to write about each of the subject areas that will be prioritised this year.
- c. In 3.2.1, there is mention of collaborating with a local school to drive up GCSEs. Has that local school been chosen because of existing links or is it a local school with people from disadvantaged communities? *This will be a local school but one hasn't been identified yet.*

Following discussion, *it was agreed that the next iteration would be circulated for comment electronically; and, the report was received.*

19/49 Any other business (Agenda item 19)

There was no other business.

19/50 Date of next meeting (Agenda item 20)

Tuesday, 22nd October 2019 at 4.00pm in M5.

Mr A Eastland, Mr L Howarth, Mr M Edwards, Mrs J Matthews and Mr M Simmons left the meeting.

Meeting closed at 6.44 pm