

## MOULTON COLLEGE

### TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

#### Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019

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

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

**19/16 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs K Delamain-Blunt.

Mr Wakeford was now a member of the Finance and Resources Committee.

**19/17 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)**

There were no declarations of interest

**19/18 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)**

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 were approved as a true and accurate record.

**19/19 Matters arising (Agenda item 3a)**

A question was raised about the new SEN (special education needs) framework in relation to progress with its implementation and ensuring staff were up to date with the requirements. The Principal confirmed that this was currently work in progress and that in terms of the CPD requirement, the College would be ready in September 2019. One Member would be attending Ofsted training and offered to provide any feedback on this subject at the next meeting of the Committee in June 2019. (**Action 48** – Vice Chair)

**19/20 Actions outstanding (Agenda item 4, Paper B)**

**18/58, Governor Training: Data Analysis**

The Office for Students had announced that a dashboard would be provided for the College's data. Once received, the data would be used to inform relevant parts of the forthcoming Access and Participation Plan for Higher Education. (Closed)

**18/59, Matters arising – Impact resulting from CPD**

A recommendation to rename the Finance Committee to become the Finance and Resources (F&R) Committee had been ratified by the Corporation in February 2019. This reflected the wider remit of the Committee to now include both physical and human resources. Although CPD reports would now be reported to the F&R Committee, as this outstanding action was about impact, it would be brought to the TLA (Teaching, Learning and Assessment) Committee at a later date. (Open)

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

**19/21 Quality Performance Health-check Report (Agenda item 5, Paper C)**

The report included a quantitative and qualitative summary and analysis of in-year data for FE (Further Education), Apprenticeship and HE (Higher Education) performance. The RAG ratings were reported as generally amber

for retention, achievement, HE retention and FE quality of TLA. Two areas were green. Attendance and Maths and English were both rated red. Members were informed of specific examples of in-year progress being made, for example with FE quality of TLA and FE retention.

**Questions:**

- a. I note the RAG rating for retention and achievement. Have there been any further indication that these have improved from autumn term to spring term? *Attendance is an ongoing challenge for the College and a number of actions are being taken by the College to address this. If you look at our student demographic over the last three years, the number of level 3 students has gone down whilst levels 1 and 2 have increased. This brings different challenges, for example, differences in teaching approaches for levels 1 and 2; and, safeguarding. This has also been the reason for increasing pastoral support.*
- b. Has any analysis been completed of why some students are not attending? *There are a number of reasons why people may not attend. In some instances it will be due to teaching and learning. Timetable issues will also have an impact on attendance. Pastoral support has only recently been introduced. We have also recruited a College Community Officer who will be patrolling and encouraging students to go to lessons. We expect all the improvements to have a positive impact.*

**Impact questions following link governor visits:**

- a. As a link governor and as Chair of the Corporation, I am proactive in meeting staff and students around the College and its many campuses. If we consider the learning environment, what do students do between lessons? Is there somewhere they can go? What do we do to incentivise attendance? *There has been a new project to incentivise attendance; the first awards were due to go out earlier in the month. In terms of timetables, moving forward to September, we want to ensure there are no gaps in students' timetables. We also need to be mindful that some students have to do Maths and some do not. This is an issue we have to resolve for the next year.*
- b. What more should we be doing to change the culture so that there is further emphasis on the benefits of good behaviour to the student body? *We have excluded 13-14 students. We must keep being hard and raising expectations as well as making sure we are always thinking about having the right people on the right course. Those that do not want to engage need to leave and we need to promote that.*
- c. As student governor, I have met with the Quality Manager to find out how learner voice is being captured. There are student representatives' meetings held half-termly. In the first meeting I attended, I heard from student representatives about how their opinions are gathered. In the second meeting, I heard about some of the points that had been suggested and of some actions that were being implemented.

The Committee agreed that the format of the report had improved greatly compared to previous years. The way in which the information was presented was easy to understand. There was also sufficient detail at course level and the use of national comparators was very helpful. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

19/22

**Quality Improvement Plan 2018-19 (Agenda item 6, Paper D)**

The report was outlined and discussed. All of the areas from the previous SAR (self-assessment report) had been included into this QIP. The report was also based on the Ofsted monitoring visit in November 2018 and suggestions from the Northampton High Needs monitoring visit in November 2018. The Committee was informed that the majority of the actions were progressing in line with agreed deadlines. Some actions had been achieved and were green. The report included a separate set of actions in relation to HE at the end of the report. The penultimate column which reported on impact would be completed in due course. The Committee was encouraged that Maths and English was not RAG rated as red. It was positive to note that there were improvements in this area. Following discussion, *the report was received.*

19/23

**OTLA progress update (Agenda item 7, Paper E)**

The report provided an insight into key themes, areas of strength and areas to improve following formal lesson observations completed to date. The report included a number of charts that presented the outcomes from the observations according to a number of key themes and by department. Members were informed that the use of colour rated topics encouraged tutors to work collaboratively to continually improve practice. This was through a professional discussion with the observer after observation and by topic related colours. Members' attention was also drawn to those key themes that had been prioritised in CPD sessions and the positive impact this had had on observation outcomes. Areas where further work was required were also outlined.

**Questions from governors:**

- a. Can you explain how staff are selected for observations? *Lesson observations are carried out on a risk-assessment basis with the more high risk teachers being observed first to enable sufficient time for support, training and re-observation. Good teachers will be observed later in the year.*
- b. How do you decide which teachers are good? *This is based on past experience; regular learning walks of lessons; from student feedback; and, previous results.*
- c. This is a good report. It gives me the detail I need about the progress that is being made and is supported by quantitative data. In terms of the number of observations completed to date, what does that represent as a proportion of possible observations? *We have had some capacity issues and as a result, we are getting some external resource to help with this. This will ensure that all staff will have been formally observed this year.*
- d. Can you provide more detail on the point in the report relating to EDI not being promoted enough? *This is about the promotion of EDI. Very often staff miss the opportunity to talk about the wider world outside of Northampton.*
- e. I am struck by the fact that there were no scores under e-learning that were in blue? People who are interested in e-learning tend to be enthusiastic. Are we trying to get teachers who have a particular interest in e-learning to help others? *E-learning is generally under-developed. This is an area we have prioritised for staff to receive CPD. We are currently recruiting coaches and would like to recruit an individual with a relevant IT background to promote this but it depends who applies for the post.*
- f. I would like to emphasise that where e-learning is concerned, it needs to have at its heart the learning side rather than e-side? *Agreed.*

- g. Can we use our better teachers as exemplars, enthusiasts, champions? Finding ways to bring their peers up to speed and sharing 'this is how I do it, this works for me? *This is something that will be achieved by the Teaching Skills Academy (TSA) ie for teachers, by teachers. The TSA will carry out informal observations but they will not be part of this process.*

**Impact questions following link governor visits:**

- a. During my last visit, I talked to the coaches who explained that there are staff who are required to cover and so cannot receive all the identified support from the coach or there is a perception by some staff that the coaching will not help them. What strategies are there to make sure anyone who needs help gets it? *If staff decide not to go, this would be their decision but it may become a performance management issue. We have talked previously about issues with staffing and cover and we have taken some positive actions to address this. As part of the SCIF (Strategic College Improvement Fund) bid, the head of the TSA is now doing very short sessions within different curriculum areas in order to coach teams. Forty eight staff were trained in this way yesterday. This is in addition to the Monday afternoon CPD sessions. We are also advertising for some more coaches and we will be offering more coaching support in the holidays.*
- b. The report clearly indicates the progress that has been made during this academic year. I think there are one or two instances whereby there is evidence that the College has made a lot of progress and is now a lot stronger rather than describing it as a strength? *Agreed. Next year we will be able to show a trend.*

19/23

**In-year Progress Report (Agenda item 8, Paper F)**

The aim of the report was to provide an in-year progress report since September 2018. The report identified a range of key challenges that were being faced by the curriculum, some of the improvements made and further changes or developments that were underway.

Learner demographics at the College had radically changed during the last 3 years. The curriculum had now been refocussed to improve the pastoral services. With increasing numbers of Level 1 and 2 learners, actions had been taken to strengthen learner support, safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. The report also included improvements with in-year retention rates especially for the first year Level 3 learners. There was positive movement in pass rates with a larger number of learners being successful in their exams and mock exams to date. Based on recent feedback and lesson observations, the learner experience had improved. There had also been an improvement with staff turnover compared to the previous year.

The Committee welcomed the report as it provided some assurances around progress which everyone agreed was important to evidence. Where student behaviour was concerned, the Committee endorsed the approaches being taken; staff had the full support of governors. In response to questions around exclusions, the Committee were assured that exclusions to date had been justifiable. The outcome of two appeals was outlined. In response to a question around any sanctions for those students who had not attended a mock exam, Programme Leaders had been tasked with following up non-attendance of those learners. The PSOs would work collaboratively to develop a PDBW (Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare) framework for the next academic year. Consideration would also be given to using

voluntary mentors from industry over the next 12 to 18 months. Following discussion, *Members recognised that further work was required and that the report provided an appropriate focus for such work; and, the report was received.*

19/24

### **Curriculum Plan (Agenda item 9, Paper G)**

The purpose of the report was to inform the Committee about the methodology used by the senior leadership team to prepare the curriculum plan for 2019-20. The College had purchased proprietary software called '4Cast' in 2018. This software would enable the College to analyse apportioned costs against income to arrive at the relative percentages of the different curriculum areas in both FE and HE. Once the contribution analysis was completed, this would be subject to external scrutiny. The overall content of the curriculum offer was also being reviewed to ensure unviable provision was stopped; the creation of more sustainable cohorts; bridging opportunities for those students requiring extra time to progress to the next level; and, to clarify which new provision might be suitable for adults from the local community. The planning process was on timetable and it was anticipated that meaningful conclusions would be able to be drawn by the end of April 2019.

#### **Questions from governors:**

- a. When is this going to be shared with the governors as they need to be alerted to any courses that are not running? *The plan is to populate this and share with the Board. Meetings are taking place this week to look at the curriculum plan. It is also quite a lot more complicated than normal. We are in a situation where we have run a curriculum that is quite narrow which has various issues for students. We are therefore looking to expand the curriculum.*
- b. To what extent will the curriculum plan take into account anything new that is needed in Northampton and so progression into employment as a result of these things? *We will be drawing on local knowledge and how that can align to the curriculum offer so that there are always employment opportunities at the end of the course.*
- c. Based on the conversations we had with the FEC (FE Commissioner) about partnerships, it would be helpful at some point to do some partnership analysis. Where there are areas which are currently on the cusp of viability, this type of analysis would help inform any decision about working in partnership with another organisation. Competitor analysis would also be helpful at some point. *There is software currently available to complete this type of regional analysis and identify where any gaps are.*

19/25

### **Office for Students (Agenda item 10, paper H)**

The report informed the Committee about the changes to the Office for Students (OfS) requirements of the forthcoming Access and Participation Plan (Plan) that was a condition of registration. This document required HE providers to detail their proposed investment in activities that sought to improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups to access, succeed in and progress from HE. The new Plan would be authored by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Dean of HE supported by the new Head of HE during April 2019. This would be followed by a period of peer assessment which would include students, HE delivery staff, SLT and governors prior to submission on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019. The Dean would ensure that the new targets to satisfy the OfS's 'ambition' test and that the apportioned investment would deliver the targets in a way that was both realistic and affordable.

The Principal informed Members that this piece of work had been added to the risk register following a meeting of the SLT earlier that day. The SLT had also identified potential opportunities of liaising with colleagues from Landex about sharing ideas. The Chair of the Committee volunteered to join the task and finish group that was being proposed. He also commented that it might be possible for him to draw on the expertise of some external contacts that he had. The importance of developing an alumni profile was raised. This would have a range of benefits to the College including quantitative data for the A&P Plan but also to help the College to be more targeted and focused on the recruitment for HE. Following discussion, *it was agreed that a task and finish group should be convened and governors invited to join (Action 49 – Clerk); and, the report was received.*

19/26

### **Safeguarding (Agenda item, Paper)**

#### **a) College Report:**

The report provided a summary of safeguarding issues at a particular point in time. As the MyConcern software had been running since October 2017, the report now included comparative data from the previous year. The report confirmed an increase in the number of safeguarding concerns compared to 2017-18. Members welcomed the level of detail that was now provided in the report.

#### **Governor questions:**

- a. Do we do any social media training for the students? *This will be something that will be addressed by the PSOs and their involvement with the development of a PDBW framework.*
- b. Have any of the PSOs worked in the mental health sector? *There are two PSOs who have some training in mental health.*
- c. Do you limit access that students might have to avoid students becoming dependent on their PSO? *Students can only have 5 sessions or a certain number of hours. PSOs are in departments and they are dealing with learners on a day to day basis. There is some information about the Student Support team ie nurse, mentors, residential co-ordinators and counselling. We have also started to bring learners together in groups to get them to support each other rather than relying on the nurse, mentor or the counsellor. Student counsellors are also involved in these groups.*

#### **b) Governor Safeguarding Champion:**

The report was in a much better format than previously. It was very comprehensive and was now enhanced by the comparisons to the previous year. The new infrastructure for Safeguarding including pastoral support was starting to work. Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

19/26

### **Link governor scheme**

The majority of visits had been completed by link governors and the report outlined some key findings. Members were invited to consider a proposal around the sequencing of visits for 2019-20. This would further help link governors with the triangulation of evidence received in Corporation and Committee meetings during visits to different departments as well as discussions with staff and students. A draft proposal would be presented in a report for the Committee to consider at its next meeting in June 2019 (**Action 50 – Clerk**). Following discussion, *the report was noted.*

**19/27**

**Vice Chair**

The Committee discussed the outcome from the last Corporation meeting in relation to each sub-Committee having at least one Vice Chair. Following discussion, Pauline Hawkesford was nominated; proposed by David McVean; and, seconded by Ann Turner.

**19/28**

**Any other business**

There was no other business.

**19/29**

**Date of next meeting**

Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 4.00pm in M5.

Meeting closed at 6.00 pm