

MOULTON COLLEGE

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 10th October 2023 at 4.00pm in M14

Present:	Alastair Thomson (Chair)	Independent Governor
	David McVean	Independent Governor
	Prof. Elaine Limond	Independent Governor
	Prof. Shan Wareing	Independent Governor
	Corrie Harris	Principal
	Michael Knibbs	Staff Governor
	Ivy Knowles	Student Governor
	Megan Smith	Student Governor
 In attendance:	 Olivia McLaughlin	 Guest Speaker – Think! (Item 22/50 – 22/52)
	Faye Williams	Vice Principal
	Matt Smith	Executive Director
	Andrew Bailey	Director of Student Services
	Brad Billington	Director of Teaching, Learning & Assessment
	Tony Mangan	Director of Quality and HE
	Nikki Southgate	Director of SEND & Student Experience
	Catherine Duro	Head of Governance (Clerk)

SECTION A – ROUTINE AND GOVERNANCE ITEMS:

22/50 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Pauline Hawkesford, Sue Ijewsky and Sam Smith

22/51 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

22/52 Presentation – HE Curriculum Development – Think! (Agenda item 3)

Introduction to the support Think! can give to the HE Agenda. – Slides to be shared

The Committee was **introduced** to Think! Consultancy and the support they can offer to Moulton College to develop its HE Curriculum.

Opportunities and factors for focus were shared. The potential impact of OfS funding priorities, the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), the uncertain global geopolitical landscape, the wider HE Landscape, the upcoming election and the cost-of-living crisis were all presented.

Questions were invited:

It was **asked** if the funding would cover the cost of the new qualifications. It was **agreed** that greater clarity around this was needed, and that the same concern applied to the lifelong learning funding regime, would it cover the costs in a way to make the courses viable. It was agreed these would remain **important considerations** as the HE strategy was developed.

Do we have breadth or depth of HE provision should remain an **ongoing question** for the Board, with a clear vision developed to address this question, following a deep internal review of the HE Curriculum.

It was **asked** if progression routes were considered. The Committee was **assured** that the college tracked destination data and would ensure progression was included in any curriculum development discussions.

The College engagement with its alumni was discussed, and the importance of this stakeholder recognised.

All agreed that widening participation was critical.

Action – A working party would be established to determine the best vehicle for governors to oversee the development of the HE strategy and scrutinise HE delivery and assessment, as part of the TLA Committee's remit.

All Committee members would like to be kept informed of upcoming changes / options analysis.

22/53 Minutes of last meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper A)

The minutes of the meeting held on the **Tuesday, 20th June 2023** were approved as a true and accurate record.

There were no matters arising.

Thanks were given to Mary Campbell who stepped in at short notice to take the minutes.

22/54 Actions from last meeting (Agenda item 5, Paper B)

There were no actions due to be reported on.

22/55 Terms of Reference (Agenda item 6, Paper C)

The terms of reference were received, with the revision proposed by the Board.

A governor **proposed** rewording the second bullet point in section 10 to ensure it was clear the committee were scrutinising and not being operational.

“Enhancing the student experience to ensure it has a positive impact on all students”

Would be amended to

“Monitoring and reviewing the way student experience is enhanced to ensure it has a positive impact on all students”

All **agreed** this was more appropriate wording and the same amendment should be made to the same point across all committees.

Resolved: that with this amendment the terms of reference be **approved**.

Action – a subsequent review of the terms of reference must ensure explicit inclusion of assessment scrutiny.

22/56 Committee Schedule of Business (Agenda item 7, Paper D)

The Committee received the Schedule of Business proposed for 2023/24. It was understood that this remained under review and would be open to change following the work of the HE working party. A couple of typographical errors would be corrected.

Resolved: that the Schedule of Business be **approved**

SECTION B – QUALITY OF EDUCATION (3I'S):

22/57 Operating Plan Progress including KPIs (Agenda item 8, Paper E)

Outturn and review against 2022/23 KPI's

It was **explained** that the presented report was to close the previous year and was therefore presented in a format consistent to the previous year. 2023/24 KPI's would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee using the FE Commissioner preferred format.

A governor **challenged** the comment that KPI's had been too ambitious. They felt the KPI's should be ambitious and where they were not met highlighted the need to scrutinise the TLA and continue to aim high for our students.

It was **asked** if the lower attendance figures were in certain areas or across the board. The Committee was advised that Level 1 attendance was a problem across the board. It was agreed **further work** was needed to look at how this cohort were supported. **(Action)**

The metrics provided for English and maths were **challenged**. It was asked why there were learners not getting any achievement at all. There was a **lengthy discussion** regarding the way this was measured, some of the barriers identified to engagement last year, and the actions being piloted this year to encourage engagement, whilst adding value to the experience of students who don't need additional English and maths too, through additional CPD sessions.

All **agreed** the Vice-Principal had been instrumental in providing **transparency**, showing both the achievement and pass rate. Governors were confident that they knew where the issues were and were **pleased** to note the results were higher than expected, and higher than the previous year.

22/58 Curriculum impact – SAR & QIP 2022-23

Updating on closure of QIP 2022/23 (Agenda item 9, Paper F)

Thank you to all staff for the work undertaken to complete the actions. **Disappointed** to have not fully achieved against 11 actions which would be carried over, with actions presented to the next meeting.

The trend against some of the targets which hadn't been met was discussed. These would be a particular focus in the new plan. Management **assured** the committee they were working harder to address these. The next meeting would capture the actions. Some issues in the data calculations were **debated**, for example where very small groups were affecting the percentages and needed narrative.

22/59 Update on achievement rates 2022/23 (Agenda item 10.)

The Committee received a verbal update on the achievement rates for 2022/23 which were yet to be finalised. Achievement was reported to be – 79.5% to 79.8% based on proportion of passes from the remaining 58 adults to be added to R14. The pass rate was – 90.7%.

Retention - 87.9%. Retention was down on the previous year, in part due to students being on courses without the right attitude and behaviours, This had affected the achievement rate.

A governor **asked** if there were any curriculum trends. The Committee was **informed** that there were some. That Programme Management Boards (PMBs) risk rated areas, with higher risk areas meeting more regularly and probed more deeply. Level 1 and 2 were of more concern, than level 3 which correlates with attendance.

All **agreed** Day 42 would be instrumental in laying the foundations for students on the right course, to enable retention, with the right behaviours. The governors gave their full backing to management to remove students who didn't have the right attitude, attendance or expectation of retention or achievement at this point.

22/60 Current Position – Learner numbers and initial feedback (Agenda item 11, Paper G)

The Committee were **pleased** to hear of a very positive start to the year.

It was **asked** if this was due to Moulton activity and reputation or demographic trend. Management **confirmed** it was driven by Moulton, which had notably received strong open day feedback. The recruitment was outperforming demographic growth.

The Committee was **informed** that there were a few courses that didn't have enough numbers to run, and that there had been some staffing challenges.

Considerable growth in construction, especially in electrical was reported. A governor **asked** how the college planned to retain them all. The committee **heard** that there had been challenging group sizes, which had led to staffing, timetable and college day changes, which had led to a disrupted start for some. All involved were working hard to settle it down and reassure students. There was a **lengthy discussion** about the management of this next year, setting minimum and maximum cohort sizes to ensure the range and quality of provision could be met.

The Committee **challenged** why it had been a successful year. Management **advised** there had been better conversions, the applicant journey had been better, onboarding events were good. Feedback received from students and parents described, a safe place and a welcoming environment. Aligned entry requirements with other local colleges had also helped. Expected growth next year in sport now Saints Rugby Club were working with the college. Universities haven't seen growth this year, thought to be due to the cost-of-living crisis.

All **agreed** there was a need in curriculum planning to plan for growth and caps, identifying areas which could be supported to grow quickly. The importance of also scenario planning was emphasised, to have plans in place in case of poorer than forecast recruitment.

The growth and brought significant risks to quality in some areas, which was being actively managed. There had been a need to respond with agency staff. Governors **reinforced** that if areas needed more money, they must ask for budget. The Committee was advised that the college may benefit from some in year growth funding too, which was to be confirmed after day 42.

Governors offered their **congratulations** on a great start to the year!

22/61 Risks and mitigations (Agenda item 12, Paper H)

The Chair appreciated the new layout of the risk report. The presented risks were discussed. There was a **robust discussion** around the key risk associated with the significant increase in EHCP learners. The Director of SEND and Student Experience **assured** the committee that dialogue was opened with the local authority around the numbers and the required funding, which they were legally obliged to provide. This would be essential to maintain the quality and resources needed for these learners.

A governor **asked** if there was a risk regarding the intent of the student CPD sessions. It was explained that these were additional to curriculum time and being run as a pilot. They were intended to positively occupies learners who don't need English and maths. Resourcing is a challenge, the library and century tech will be used to aid learner engagement. The Vice Principal would be seeking staff and student feedback. All agreed it was a great concept for enrichment when the detail is right for students.

It was confirmed that strategic risks are being reviewed by SLT bimonthly.

22/62 Safeguarding update (Agenda item 13, Paper I)

The Committee heard that the wellbeing hub service was being very well used. Which is sad, but shows it's accessible and purposeful.

The general **trend** in issues reported followed the previous year. It was though sad to see home issues and cost of living hitting hard. Food parcels were now being provided by the college which were in high demand.

A governor **asked** if the college reviewed care experienced learners who are now with a family – yes, but not reported on but we are aware of, or estranged students, yes, have a bursary for estranged students.

The Committee was informed that nearly £500k had already been spent supporting learners during September 2023.

There was a balance between promoting the bursary support and responding to those seeking help as the fund was now very limited. Mangers were proactively seeking new grants and funds available to apply for further funding.

SECTION C – TRIANGULATION:

22/63 Link Governor Scheme Feedback (Agenda item 14, Paper J)

The Committee received a report from the link governor for quality.

22/64 Student Governor Feedback (Agenda item 15)

The student governors reported that students appreciate the new timetables. Classes have been extended by an extra 15 minutes which is felt as a positive.

A governor **asked** if students feel that they are well supported. A lot of new students all seem comfortable and know where they need to go for support. The student governors didn't feel able to really speak for day students but **assured** the committee that the residential students definitely get the support they need from wardens.

SECTION D – ANNUAL REPORTS 2022/23

22/65 Safeguarding and Prevent (Agenda item 16, Paper K)

The Annual Safeguarding and Prevent report was received.

Concern was raised around the percentage of staff who have completed the safeguarding update training this year. The Committee very strongly agreed that this position was not good enough.

Three **urgent actions** were raised: **(ACTION)**

1. A breakdown of the figures to understand the reasons behind the non-compliance – e.g. accessibility, long term absence (maternity, sick etc), so that the 'real' % of non-compliance can be understood and the reasons behind it.
2. A timed action plan to address the non-compliance.
3. Update figures to be reported to the next meeting.

Resolved: that with the outcome of these actions the report be recommended to the Board.

22/66 Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions, (Agenda item 17, Paper L)

The Committee were grateful for the report. Governors **appreciated** the transparency and the learnings from the reported matters.

Resolved: that the Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions report be approved.

22/67 Equality, diversity and inclusion (Agenda item 18, Paper M)

The Committee received the report. All agreed it was an excellent, comprehensive report, which demonstrated Moulton well, when it could have been a generic report. The Committee are proud to recommend it to the Board for approval and publishing. It was noticed that there was still lots of work to do to keep progressing culture, but it was moving in the right direction.

Resolved: that the report be **recommended** to the Board for approval and publishing

22/68 CEIAG annual report (inc pastoral, work-experience, tutorials, enrichment)

The annual CEIAG report was received. Questions were invited.

The language was commented on, which reported that CEIAG was important to young people, it was remarked that it remained important to everyone, not just young people.

It was explained that the metrics are down a little, but different metric collection and calculation had been used. It is now reporting accurately and will be directly comparable in future.

Resolved: that the CEIAG report be approved.

SECTION E – POLICIES

22/69 Policies (Agenda item 20, Paper O)

The following policies were received for consideration and approval:

- a. Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions Policy
- b. HE Student Protection Plan
- c. Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy
The minor changes were explained. Including broadening apprenticeship and, the coaching provision. The process hasn't changed but additional support had been added.
- d. Student Bursary & Discretionary Bursary & Loan Fund Policy
The importance of the activity and securing sufficient funding to support it was agreed.
- e. Safeguarding Policy
- f. Prevent Policy
- g. Child on Child abuse Policy

Resolved that the:

Compliments, Complaints and Suggestions Policy and the HE Student Protection Plan be **approved**

Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy, Student Bursary & Discretionary Bursary & Loan Fund Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Prevent Policy and Child on Child abuse Policy be **recommended** to the board for approval.

SECTION F – CLOSING ITEMS:

22/70 Any other items of urgent business (Agenda item 21)

There were no further items to discuss.

22/71 Impact of Governance (Agenda item 22)

The Head of Governance introduced a new concluding item to the Committee. It was **proposed and agreed** that the Committee would take time at the end of each meeting to reflect on its impact and effectiveness.

- Driving the progression of Governance of the HE Curriculum
- Robust challenge of staff compliance with safeguarding training with urgent actions
- Questioned the reasons for good recruitment, didn't take success for granted.
- Triangulation worked well to reinforce and challenge the narrative provided in the reports.
- The metronome of accountability was noted. The importance of being there, with the formality of the meeting, enabling conscious review of data and policies to ensure they were fit for purpose was respected.

22/72 Date and time of next meeting (Agenda item 23)

21st November 2023 at 4.00pm