

**AQUINAS COLLEGE
TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE**

Date: 3 October 2023

Time: 4.30pm

Venue: College

GOVERNORS PRESENT

Miss M Braithwaite, Mr R Harris, Mr G Hynes, Mr A Martin, Mr D Pearson, Dr A Smith and Mr M Taylor.

In attendance:

Ms C Phillips (Assistant Principal – Curriculum & Quality)

Dr A Smith in the Chair.

1. OPENING PRAYER

The meeting began with a prayer led by Dr A Smith.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr B Hickey and from Mr R Harris for his late arrival.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Governors and Staff were asked to declare any interest, which they may have in any of the items on the Agenda for this meeting. No interests were declared.

4. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 copies of which had been circulated previously were approved and signed by the Chairperson as a correct record subject to Minute 6 paragraph 7 reading:

Mr Hynes and Mr Taylor felt that the inspectors did not understand that the college was more academically focused and, therefore, whilst the skills agenda was definitely being addressed it was not a major part of what the college had to offer.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE COMMITTEE MINUTES

There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda for the meeting.

6. OFSTED INSPECTION

Mr Pearson introduced the Ofsted Inspection Report that had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. After taking advice from the SFCA, the college had made a formal challenge to some of the wording in the report and some of the statements made that had formed the judgement of the inspectors. The SFCA had stated that it was unlikely that any significant changes would be made by Ofsted.

The report had been received in college on the last day of the summer term and a few minor changes had been made. It was felt that the college had been mis-represented and that the college was in a good place, but this had not been truly recognised by the inspectors. Mr Pearson added that the college had not prepped the students for the inspection. Mr Pearson also advised Governors that the SFCAs hoped that making a formal challenge would put the spotlight on the complaint's procedure.

Ms Phillips advised Governors that the college was unhappy with the methodology used. The evidence base was subjective and based on inspectors' perceptions. In addition, only a small number of students had been consulted. The inspectors had been challenged on enrichment because they would not accept that some areas were classed as enrichment. An example of this was that they stated that the Pathway students do not undertake work experience, when in fact they do. This was changed in the report from a weakness to a strength. Mr Pearson informed Governors that 370 parents had responded to the survey. The responses had been very positive but these had not been taken in to account in the inspectors judgements.

Mr Hynes asked if the college had challenged the make up of the inspection team. Mr Pearson replied that the college had queried why there was no inspector with sixth form experience, they were all from an FE background. Mr Pearson added that the Quality Assurance Inspector had been replaced at the last minute. Mr Hynes asked what had been the parents response to the inspection. Mr Pearson replied that it was not raised at the recent Open Day and no feedback had been received from parents. It was not anticipated that the inspection would have any impact on admissions or the reputation of the college.

Dr Smith felt that the college was better place now than at previous inspections when it was classed as Outstanding.

7. **RESULTS OVERVIEW**

Mr Pearson advised Governors that last year the results at the college had taken a big step forward. He circulated a paper that showed the college's results compared to the national average for the period 2019 to 2023.

The results in previous years had been based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) and Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) with 2022 results based on formal examinations with some areas for examination known. Most colleges were where they felt they would be but the Aquinas College's results had increased by around 10% when compared with the national average.

a) Results Overview 2023 – Overall analysis, figures in brackets are 2019.

Pass Rate (A*- E)	(98.8%) (98.0)
A*	(7.1)% (5.6%)
A*/A	(25.8%) (21.3%)
High Grades (A*-B)	(57.5%) (48.6%)
A*-C	(82.0%) (75.5%)
A*-D	(94.4%) (96.3%)

Ms Phillips circulated a paper that gave details of the results for 2023. She advised Governors that the following papers were on the Governors Google Drive:

- i) Results Review Meeting 2023 – Detailed Overview and Risk rating
- ii)Learning, Teaching and Assessment 2022-2025 and 2023-2024
- iii) Reviews of Marking – Changes at 1 October 2023
- iv) Nick Allen Value Added Report (whole college, subject group of learners)
- v) ALPS Connect value- added report – to be added (whole college, subject group of learners)
- vi) Adult Education Results 2023
- vii) Level 2 (CTEC Business Results)

Alps Value Added is significantly higher than 2019 when the college APLS 5. 2023 ALPS 3 which reflects performance in the top 25% nationally.

b) A Level Subject Breakdown 2023

- i) There were 10 subjects that had an ALPS score of 2 or 3
- ii) There were 5 subjects that had an ALPS score of 4
- iii) There were 10 subjects that had an ALPS score of 5
- iv) There were 9 subjects that had an ALPS score of 6
- v) Three subjects have a Blue ALPS
- vi) Three subjects have an ALPS score of 7 and therefore a Blue ALPS

The Learning Teaching and Assessment Focus and support needs of each department will be discussed at further Quality Review Meetings in October/ November 2023.

There will be a focus on further developing all subjects, with a particular focus on essay subjects for 2023/2024. There will also be a focus on planning and sequencing (inside and outside the classroom), ownership and stretch to support KPI for higher grades and A/A*

c) Vocational Subjects

Media, Performing Arts (Dance) and Music have remained or returned to a QCF specification (non examined).

Overall Pass Rate is 100%, D*/D (High Grades) are 72%. Some subjects are awaiting reviews of marking.

d) Vocational Subject Breakdown showing their D/D* rate

i) Double Sports CTEC (123)	100%
ii) IT (31)	74%
iii) Applied Science (41)	63%
iv) Health and Social Care (94)	73%
v) Applied Law (105)	64%
vi) Music performance (44)	89%
vii) Creative media (68)	62%
viii) Performance – Acting/Dance (26)	29%
ix) Uniformed Protective Services (40)	55%
x) Financial Studies (28)	43%
xi) Applied Business (84)	37%

e) GCSE/Level 2 Results

i) English (45) Pass 4 to 6 Grade (30)	75.5%
ii) Maths (87) Pass 4 to 5 Grade (35)	58.4%
iii) Japanese (8) Pass 4 and above	88%
iv) Business L2 (37) 4 GCSE Equivalent	86%
2 GCSE Equivalent	8%
1 GCSE Equivalent	6%

f) Other

EPQ (141)A* -B) 66%

Ms Phillips informed Governors that there will be an A level Results Review with every department. There will be Learning, Teaching and Assessment appraisal and each department will receive a RAG rating. There are four ratings:

- i) Understanding – not understanding
- ii) Development - understand but not confident
- iii) Implementation - appraisal understood and developed
- iv) Advanced - full understanding

Ms Phillips advised Governors that in the case of music there had been a change of examining board. A discussion took place on English Language (Alps 6) and English Literature (Alps 6), the combined course has an Alps 2. The syllabuses are different and it is not a fair comparison.

The Governors thanked Ms Phillips for the informative presentation and report.

Mr Taylor asked how many students do Loreto and Xaverian colleges have on roll. Mr Pearson replied that Loreto has around 3,500 and Xaverian around 2,900 students. He added that Xaverian has a large campus and has had some new build and porta cabins. Aquinas student numbers are currently around 2,400. As numbers increase it is difficult to control quality. Mr Hynes said that Loreto has advertised in the Community Newsletter for Bramhall. Mr Pearson added that the proposed new build would be as flexible as possible to ensure that the site remains manageable and students have a positive experience.

Mr Taylor asked is there a correlation between subjects and staffing difficulties. Mr Pearson replied that there is minimal correlation but accountancy was a difficult subject to cover last year.

8. COLLEGE FOCUS 2023/2024

Ms Phillips advised Governors that the college focus remains the same and is working hard to ensure that students had a good learning experience. In addition, the health and welfare of both staff and students were important. The Teaching, Learning and Assessment involves departments, subjects, teachers and students. There is reflective practice and reflective learning.

Ms Phillips added that further information on the college's focus can be found on the Governors portal.

9. DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION

Mr Pearson outlined to Governors the latest position in respect of Denominational Inspections. A national framework has been finalised and the Diocese will appoint a team of inspectors, of which one must have experience of work in a sixth form college. The inspection would take two days with three inspectors.

Whilst the college has not been informed when it will be inspected it is anticipated that it will be during the current academic year. Mr Pearson advised Governors that the Catholic Life of the college included more payer and liturgy has been introduced. Ethics was now called General Religious Education.

Mr Pearson advised Governors that Mission and Ethos Group within college were preparing for the inspection. The college would be allowed a grade 3 in one area. Mr Pearson reminded Governors that the inspection is on behalf of the Bishop.

10. CURRICULUM ISSUES

Mr Pearson circulated a paper that outlined the proposed Post 16 Level 3 Reforms that under the current Government plans, would mean that September 2024 will be the last time that the college can offer some of the Applied General subjects that it currently offers. The opposition parties have made a promise to pause and review the removal of the Applied General and introduction of Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQs).

Currently no Applied General will be de-funded before 1 August 2025, with most not being de funded until 1 August 2026.

The college currently offers 12 subjects for between a quarter and one third of students. The courses that will be affected are as follows:

Financial Studies is already being phased out.

Applied Business (180), Law (190) and Criminology*(280)... our 3 biggest AGQ courses would all go; 37% D*D: 68% D*D: 66% A*B

In lower sixth these 650 entries are from 1333 students, or roughly equivalent to 1 in 2 students choosing one of these courses. These account for 16% of entries and 2 of these AGQs that will go are high performing.

Media (140), Sport (150), IT (60), Health and Social (120), Science (80), Performing Arts (25), music (35) and Dance (20) hope to still exist as AAQs. About 630 entries.

None of these courses are certain to be reformed but there are good cases for them all to carry on. The current plan is that you would only be able to take one AAQ alongside 2 A levels.

564 students in the Lower 6 are on a mixed programme 344 doing 2 A levels and 1 Voc in line with the above model. But 220 on 2 Voc and 1 A level.

More worryingly there are 165 students who are only on Vocational courses (some combined with L2 resits).

This suggests we have 385 students from the lower sixth whom the college believes are currently being served well by them entering for multiple Voc courses for whom suitable course combinations will no longer be available.

Discussions have begun about suitable programmes of study, prior attainment levels and entry requirements as well as learning and teaching approaches for students with weaker prior attainment. The college is also engaging with feeder schools to understand their curriculum offer and consider how the college can complement this in the pathways that are offered.

Mr Martin left the meeting whilst this item was being discussed.

11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) Destination Report

It was agreed that the Destinations Report that is submitted to the General Purposes Committee should also be submitted to this committee.

b) Quality Reviews

Mr Pearson advised Governors that the Quality Review meetings would be held in college week commencing 30 October 2023. Governors were welcome to attend any of these meetings and a copy of the timetable for these meetings would be sent to Governors.

c) Manchester Bacculaureate

Mr Taylor advised Governors that through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority it was proposed that the Manchester Bacculaureate would be passed to colleges and schools

12. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

6 February 2024 at 4.30pm

Signed _____
Chairperson

Date _____