

TMC Board meeting

14 February 2025, Openshaw

Present: Dame Ann Limb DBE DL (chair), Philip Johnson, Catherine Hill OBE (via teams), Rachel Curry (Principal), and Mubarak Oyeboode.

Apologies: Mark Fletcher, Justice Ellis, and Garry Bridges

In Attendance: Debbie Sanderson (Vice Principal Resources, Planning & Performance), Michael Walsh (Deputy Principal: Adult Curriculum and Student Support), Lorna Lloyd-Williams (Company Secretary & General Counsel), Barry Atkins (Deputy Principal), Michelle Fletcher (Vice Principal – TMC Quality), Ed Lack (Group Quality Director and Standards), Orla Wood (Divisional Finance Director – College and Income Team), Marie Stock (Vice Principal Student Experience and Support) Stuart Steen, Vice Principal FE and Yetunde D. Olabode (Governance and Legal Advisor).

For item 5 – Andrew Hulme (Director of Special Educational Needs and Disability)

The meeting opened at 10:00 and was quorate with at least 3 Governors present	
1	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Mark Fletcher, Justice Ellis, Garry Bridges and Mark Harris.</p>
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p> <p><i>Mubarak Oyeboode joined the meeting at 10:02am</i></p>
3	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETING of 26th of November 2024</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on the 26th of November 2024 were approved as a true and correct record of the meeting.</p>
4	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The Board received the matters arising for assurance and noted completion/ progress against the same.</p>
5	<p>PRESENTATION FROM DEPARTMENT – SUPPORTED LEARNING</p> <p>The Board was appraised of the strategic alignment between skills development and employability, highlighting the need to expand the skilled workforce, including adults and SEND learners, to support sustainable careers. The department, comprising over 100 staff, operated across three key areas, with an external-facing administrative unit managing engagement with 16 local authorities and overseeing income. The Board was informed that two-thirds of the department focused on in-class support, while the remaining third provided out-of-class assistance. A transition team and a dedicated wing supported students with EHCPs and specific learning needs. The department followed an anticipatory approach, ensuring SEND learners received tailored support from enrolment through their studies. The Graduated Response model, aligned with government policy, guided SEND support across approximately 6,000 students, including 600 with EHCPs. The Board noted that while younger students received in-class support, adult learners primarily accessed out-of-class provisions, demonstrating the model's scalability.</p>

It was emphasised that high-quality teaching, differentiation, and structured lesson planning formed the foundation of "ordinarily available provision," reinforcing the need to embed SEND responsibilities within teaching roles.

The Board was advised that, as of the end of January, 599 students were recorded as having EHCPs. The College maintained a strong working relationship with Manchester City Council, ensuring that nearly all these students received Element 3 funding. The complexity of securing this funding was acknowledged, requiring a detailed bidding process for each eligible student. The Board was also informed of an ongoing pilot scheme with Manchester City Council under the Emergency Learning Fund, supporting 16 students who did not have an EHCP pre-16 but required specialist support. The College's expertise in SEND provision was recognised, allowing it to perform work typically handled by educational psychologists.

The Board inquired why the College had to bid for funding rather than it being an automatic entitlement for students. It was clarified that a personised approach was taken to each with factors such as parental expectations, changes to support requirements post-16 from those provided (or not) in schools and different approaches taken by local authorities influencing the level of support sought and funding available. It was further highlighted that there was inconsistency across different local authorities in understanding and allocating Element 2 funding. Additionally, it was explained that each borough had its own funding mechanisms and allocation processes, which sometimes resulted in differences over the level of support required for a particular student. While Manchester provided funding with minimal negotiation, due to the trusted partner relationship between the College and the Council, securing funding from other boroughs often required extensive discussions.

The Board further inquired whether there could be instances where a student had an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) but did not receive the necessary funding. It was confirmed that such situations were possible due to variations in borough policies. It was explained that, in some cases, parents might request a certain level of support, the College might recommend another, and the borough could hold a different perspective, leading to prolonged negotiations. The intricacy of navigating multiple stakeholders in such discussions was noted. It was further clarified that while Element 2 funding remained relatively static, Element 3 funding required a detailed breakdown of expenditure and justification for the requested support, necessitating further discussions with the respective local authority. The Board sought clarification regarding whether funding responsibility lay with the borough where the student resided. It was confirmed that this was the case. It was highlighted to the Board that different local authorities operated with varying administrative approaches. The Chair highlighted the challenges posed by differing funding approaches across boroughs within the mayoral combined authority and emphasised the need for a uniform GM-wide model to ensure consistency, reduce bureaucracy, and enhance efficiency. It was acknowledged that collaboration with Manchester City Council had demonstrated the model's effectiveness, and the Chair recommended raising the issue at the Greater Manchester level. Appreciation was extended to the Principalship and team for managing these complexities. The Principal acknowledged the team's significant administrative efforts in securing funding across multiple boroughs. Strong partnerships with Manchester City Council were recognised as vital in ensuring student support while delivering cost efficiencies. The College's expertise in managing SEND provisions was highlighted as key to these negotiations, benefiting both students and the wider education system.

The Board was informed of the College's growth trajectory, and it was projected that approximately 200 additional students would be enrolled based cohort increases with a reasonable assessment that of these a proportion would require support. The Board was further informed that since 2016, there had been a 301% increase in students with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), rising from 166 to approximately 650-670.

The Board inquired whether the rise in student numbers would proportionally increase EHCP cases, given the reported surge in SEND diagnoses in schools. Concerns were raised about a compounded impact from both higher intake and growing identification of additional needs. It was explained that the increasing demand for SEND support underscored the need for all teachers to be equipped to assist SEND learners.

The Board was appraised that the College served a diverse student population, with approximately 33% of EHCP learners coming from outside Manchester City Council's jurisdiction. A breakdown of the intake showed that 30% of students originated from boroughs such as Trafford and Stockport, with additional students enrolling from areas including Wigan, Bolton, and Bury. The Board received a summary of Learning Difficulty or Disability (LDD) declarations, highlighting the complexity of student support needs. It was clarified that the 1,344 reported cases reflected self-declared needs at enrolment rather than formal diagnoses, requiring the College to assess and differentiate between verified conditions and perceived needs. The Board was informed that social and emotional challenges accounted for 41% of recorded needs, a significant rise from previous years. Dyslexia remained prevalent, with notable variation across departments, indicating a need for targeted CPD strategies. The importance of aligning departmental support strategies with student needs was emphasised.

The Board inquired about the prevalence of dyspraxia, noting that it appeared to be a growing issue within the sector but had not been distinctly highlighted in the data. It was explained that the presented data focused on the most common categories, with approximately 20 key areas identified. However, it was acknowledged that dyspraxia frequently coexisted with dyslexia and other learning difficulties. It was noted that while dyslexia was once a primary diagnosis within Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), current trends indicated that autism and social-emotional challenges were now more commonly prioritised, with dyslexia often listed as a secondary or tertiary condition. Performance data indicated that students receiving support performed comparably to their non-SEND peers, reinforcing the College's strong reputation in delivering high-quality education.

The Board was informed that some local authorities and Colleges maintained strict EHCP caps. As a result, Colleges with inclusive SEND policies faced disproportionate capacity pressures on staff and resources. The Board was informed that capacity remained a key consideration as the enrolment of students with learning difficulties continued to increase, including those requiring support without an EHCP. While effective transition arrangements were in place for Manchester-based students, variations in support structures across local authorities presented challenges. It was noted that ensuring students were placed in settings best suited to meet their individual needs would remain an important factor in future capacity planning. Despite these pressures, the Board was advised that Element 2 funding enabled broader College support. It was highlighted that strong teaching staff and support workers played a crucial role in fostering an inclusive learning environment, ensuring all students, including those with EHCPs and dyslexia, benefited from structured and targeted support.

Additionally, there was a growing number of students with speech, language, and communication needs, prompting the College to collaborate with external partners for specialised support. Autism was identified as another significant category, comprising 26% of EHCP students. The Board noted that these figures aligned with earlier discussions, reaffirming the correlation between complex needs and the demand for specialist provision. It was highlighted that EHCP students could declare varying numbers of needs, leading to a total need count exceeding the number of individual students. This accounted for the final EHCP dataset figure of 1,099 'needs'.

The Board was presented with two case studies demonstrating the impact of assistive technology and tailored support. The first highlighted a student with muscular dystrophy who, through eye-recognition software funded by Manchester City Council, gained independence in using digital tools, enabling progression to Level 3 and university aspirations. The second case featured a deaf student who, with Communication Support Worker assistance, successfully completed creative media courses by adapting to sound-related coursework using vibrations. Both cases underscored the College's commitment to accessibility and inclusive learning. The Board noted that these case studies demonstrated the scalability of the College's support systems, accommodating both marginal and significant needs.

The Board was informed that 668 adult learners had declared or been referred for additional support. It was highlighted that a pilot program was currently underway, providing out-of-class support for fewer than 10 adult learners, with the aim of expanding this provision in the future. The Board was advised that ensuring adequate support for adult learners remained a priority, with a focus on strengthening transition

arrangements. Embedding a robust SEND presence within adult learning was recognised as a strategic objective, while acknowledging the need to balance resource allocation effectively. The Board was apprised of the out-of-class support structure, which included exam access arrangements, assistive technology, and specialist external consultants.

Significant progress had been made in integrating SEND training into CPD, with four sessions planned for the Festival of Learning. Classroom support workers and transition peers played a vital role in embedding SEND awareness. Dyslexia and autism awareness remained priorities, with proposals for staff training to enhance accessibility through structured communication, clear signage, and adapted learning materials. The Board inquired whether dyslexia awareness training could be extended to board members, particularly in relation to improving accessibility in governance documents and aligning with Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) objectives. The Board acknowledged that increasing awareness within governance structures could enhance inclusivity and support decision-making.

The Board was apprised of the most recent deep dive feedback, which was positive. It was noted that a primary area for improvement was enhancing teachers' capacity for highly supportive and active communication. While comprehensive information-sharing and strategic recommendations were established, further efforts were required to enhance their practical implementation in classroom settings. The Board was informed that ongoing collaboration with the quality team aimed to seamlessly integrate best practices into teaching environments, with a particular focus on classroom design, font selection, and accessibility—key elements in fostering effective teaching and maintaining high-quality standards. The Board was informed of a strategic objective to ensure all curriculum areas analysed achievement data to identify gaps and implement targeted improvements. Aligning learner profiles with CPD and structured teaching strategies was emphasised, particularly for supporting students with autism and dyslexia. Structured lesson planning, predictable exam formats, and anticipatory planning based on past student needs were identified as key priorities. It was noted that optimising classroom accessibility could enhance support distribution. Additionally, student feedback from the Quality Development Plan (QDP) highlighted areas for improvement in the experiences of EHCP students, particularly in relation to enrollment processes, application forms, and campus navigation. In response, working groups were established to enhance these aspects and ensure a more streamlined and supportive student journey.

The Board was informed that staff recruitment and training efforts were ongoing, with a focus on transitioning high-performing agency staff into permanent roles. The Board was advised of ongoing efforts to enhance the development of Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) targets, ensuring they remained aspirational, employment-focused, and accessible to both students and staff. Work continued to refine this approach to ensure that PFA targets were meaningful and supportive of student progression.

The Board was also informed of continued progress in exam access arrangements for SEND learners, with an increase in provisions for extra time, readers, and scribes. It was noted that adjustments were sometimes necessary when reassessing students who had previously received accommodation in school, which could lead to differences in expectations. The Board was assured that all assessments were conducted in full compliance with regulatory standards, ensuring appropriate and fair support for all learners. The Board was informed that Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) inspections of exam access arrangements had consistently yielded positive feedback.

The Board was informed of the College's strategy for improving communication and accessibility through a new methodology, referred to as Fonts, Language, Images, Colour, and Spacing and Layout (FLICS), had been developed to support dyslexia-friendly communication practices. The framework emphasised the importance of using plain language, structured formatting, and clear visual contrasts. It was highlighted that ensuring readability through appropriate spacing, layout, font size, and color contrast was a simple yet effective strategy for improving accessibility. The Board recognised the significance of this approach in fostering inclusivity and ensuring that the College communication remained accessible to all learners.

The Board inquired whether there was an increasing need for the College to identify students with learning difficulties or if such needs were typically recognised by parents at an early stage. The Board sought

	<p>clarification on the College's approach to identifying students who might self-declare learning difficulties upon enrolment. It was explained that awareness of learning difficulties had increased significantly, with a growing number of individuals receiving late diagnoses. The Board was informed that while universal screening was a possibility, the College currently employed a "normal way of working" approach, which was teacher-led. Under this model, teachers used a standardised checklist to observe and assess students' learning behaviours. The checklist enabled teachers to identify students who exhibited challenges such as verbal fluency but limited written output. It was further noted that once initial observations were made, referrals were directed to the support team, who then conducted processing tests to determine whether students met specific thresholds for further intervention. The Board was advised that prioritising screenings for students undertaking exams was essential, as failing to identify and address learning needs could impact exam performance. However, it was acknowledged that extending the screening process to all students would be beneficial as a broader the College practice. The Board recognised the importance of refining identification processes to ensure that all students requiring support were identified and provided with appropriate interventions in a timely manner.</p> <p>The Board inquired about the financial sustainability of the SEND department. It was explained that high-needs funding was assessed on an individual basis, ensuring that faculty funding was directly aligned with student requirements. The funding model operated on a "money in, money out" basis, taking into account both staff costs and the necessary financial resources to support students. The Board acknowledged that some colleges struggled with funding limitations despite having a high number of SEND students, which could strain overall budgets. It was noted that effective SEND support benefited all students, leading to improved retention, higher achievement rates, and overall financial stability. Secondly, a shift towards increased out-of-class support allowed for a more cost-effective delivery model, particularly in areas such as accessibility tools and structured writing frameworks. The Board was informed that leveraging technology enabled support to be delivered efficiently to a larger number of students without a proportional increase in staffing costs. It was emphasised that the College adopted an inclusive approach to support workers, ensuring that support was embedded across the entire classroom environment.</p> <p>The Board noted the importance of fostering an inclusive environment by expanding disability awareness initiatives to staff. It was highlighted that some staff had gained new insights into their own learning challenges through training, reflecting the prevalence of late diagnoses. In response, screening opportunities had been extended to department heads. The Chair commended the SEND team's efforts in delivering high-quality support and emphasised the need for continued staff awareness and cross-departmental collaboration. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening inclusive practices across the College.</p>
6	<p>PRINCIPAL'S OVERVIEW INCL RISK SUMMARY AND SCORECARD OUTCOME</p> <p>The Principal highlighted strong performance across key areas. No significant risks were identified, and staff engagement survey responses reflected a positive outlook. The Board was advised that the KPI scorecard showed positive trends, with most indicators performing well and no immediate concerns. Additional details on student numbers and progress against targets, as requested, confirmed strong performance. It was noted that a recent risk register review showed slight improvements in some areas, with most risks remaining stable. It was noted that refining data collection and analysis of some employee data remained a focus on the context of the diversity and inclusion data.</p>
7	<p>MID-YEAR REPORT ON QUALITY INCL QIP UPDATE AND STUDENT VOICE</p> <p>The Board received an update on the mid-year quality report and performance metrics. The Board was informed that the scorecard provided key performance metrics for TMC, with a macro-level summary highlighting overall outcomes. The majority of indicators were categorised as green, reflecting strong performance across the College. However, some areas remained areas for improvement, particularly in mathematics and English. It was noted that recent GCSE resit results in mathematics showed a positive trend in high-grade attainment, though there was still work to be done to achieve the high grade outcomes</p>

targeted. The Board was advised that retention and attendance rates remained strong, aligning with historically high achievement levels and supporting a positive outlook for the 2024–2025 academic year. Deep dive activities had been conducted across 26 curriculum areas, with a targeted focus on those identified for improvement. The results reaffirmed the strength of curriculum delivery and the effectiveness of ongoing improvement strategies. It was noted that deep dive activities had been temporarily paused to facilitate discussions on their future implementation, though they remained an integral part of the quality assurance framework. The Board noted that the scorecard provided a clear summary of performance, demonstrating that existing processes were effective and would continue to drive improvements. It was acknowledged that quality assurance activities such as deep dives and learner walks were integral to day-to-day operations. The Board reaffirmed its support for maintaining the established quality framework and acknowledged the positive impact of these practices on student outcomes.

The Board was informed of updates to the BRAGG rating system, which had been implemented to refine the evaluation of subject and level performance. It was noted that the decision to introduce a double-Green (GG) rating had preceded similar developments in national frameworks, reinforcing the College's proactive approach. The rationale behind this change was to differentiate between "good" and "very good" provision, ensuring that top-performing subjects received appropriate recognition. The Board was assured that the BRAGG rating system provided a comprehensive assessment of all provisions, drawing from historical deep dives, learning walks, student outcomes, and attendance data.

The Board was informed of targeted support measures for areas of improvement. Level 1 Construction was one such area where enhanced support mechanisms had been introduced, including weekly senior-led meetings to drive improvement. A site visit to the construction department before Christmas provided valuable insights into the quality of education, student engagement, and overall learning environment, with stronger performance observed at the Openshaw campus compared to Wythenshawe. The Board inquired about the reasons for performance differences between the two campuses. It was explained that behaviour, attitudes, and educational support were key indicators evaluated during the deep dive, and one campus had demonstrated greater challenge in these areas. As a result, enhanced support continued, with advanced practitioners and additional quality assurance staff deployed to provide wraparound support. Further reinforcement had been introduced, including oversight from a Quality Director to strengthen teaching and learning practices. The Board sought clarification on whether the additional support focused primarily on staff or student behaviour. It was explained that while the emphasis was on equipping teachers with the necessary skills to manage classroom dynamics, departmental leadership was also being supported to strengthen management structures. Staff development initiatives included tailored training in teaching and learning strategies, behaviour management, and student engagement techniques. The Board was informed that additional support had been provided to departmental heads to ensure sustained improvements. The Board was informed that follow-up visits to the campus showed significant improvements, with enhanced classroom environments fostering effective teaching. Students were observed as engaged on tasks, and confident in their learning. The progress was recognised as a testament to the effectiveness of targeted interventions by the Board.

It was explained that while steady progress was underway, long-term success would rely on ensuring students were enrolled in the most suitable courses from the outset, supported by appropriate guidance and tailored provision.

The Board was informed that a three-year curriculum strategy, led by the new Assistant Principal, had been developed in collaboration with industry partners to refine course offerings. A recent industry engagement event, attended by 30 stakeholders from key sectors, had provided valuable insights to shape a more responsive curriculum. It was noted that a formal curriculum redesign would be presented in March, outlining steps to equip students with industry-relevant skills. Ensuring Level 1 provision offered clear career pathways was emphasised as a priority. The Board acknowledged the progress made and the strategic focus on curriculum development, industry collaboration, and student progression, recognising the need for continued improvements in management, teaching quality, and alignment with

workforce needs. The Chair noted that improvements in the construction at level 1 were aligned with the College's long-term strategic objectives.

The Board was informed that, in addition to curriculum development, strengthening partnerships with external organisations was essential to supporting young people who may not yet be ready for College. Developing alternative pathways was identified as a key strategy to facilitate smoother transitions into further education. It was noted that the three-year curriculum strategy, though designed for sustained impact, underscored the College's commitment to aligning courses with evolving regional and national skills priorities. The Board emphasised the strength of the College's internal quality assurance processes, ensuring continuous improvement across all departments. While external inspections provided oversight, the deep dive methodology was recognised as highly effective in identifying and addressing areas for development. The Board reaffirmed confidence in the College's leadership and strategic direction.

The Board received an update on English and Maths performance. It was reported that November resit results showed an improvement in the number of students achieving a grade 4 in both subjects compared to the previous year. Additionally, there was a reduction in the number of students receiving a grade 3, positioning more learners to progress towards higher grades in future assessments. The Board was informed that the College had entered 2,877 students for GCSE resits. The Board inquired about the performance of students in the November resit exams, recognising the importance of these results in assessing progress. It was reported that 16.5% of students achieved a pass in Maths, while 28.5% achieved a pass in English, both of which were above the College's end-of-year targets. The Board sought clarification on whether these results indicated that the College was on track to meet its overall targets. It was confirmed that the results provided early evidence of progress, demonstrating that current intervention strategies were yielding positive outcomes. It was acknowledged that continued monitoring and intervention would remain key priorities to sustain positive momentum and further strengthen student attainment in English and Maths. The Board was reminded that English and Maths followed a progress-based model, with high-grade attainment being one measure among many. It was noted that deep dives conducted in English and Maths departments had provided assurance that improvements were being realised. Attendance rates in both subjects had increased, with Maths at 81% and English at 82%, reflecting a notable improvement compared to the previous year. A particularly strong attendance rate of 84% was reported in a recent deep dive, which was recognised as a significant achievement by sector benchmarks.

Strong departmental leadership and the appointment of a specialist practitioner had further enhanced instructional quality and student engagement. Additional small-group support sessions had been expanded, running from half-term through the exam period, to provide targeted academic interventions and improve exam preparedness. While KPIs highlighted areas for further improvement, evidence of progress was clear. The high volume of resit students continued to place pressure on resources, a challenge expected to persist.

The Board was also advised of ongoing national discussions on post-16 English and Maths reforms, including potential alternative qualification pathways, though decisions were pending. The Board noted that an interim report on potential changes to post-16 English and Maths qualifications was anticipated in the spring, potentially signalling a shift in policy. The Board discussed the balance between maintaining the mandatory requirement for GCSE English and Maths for all post-16 students and introducing alternative pathways to better support diverse learning needs. It was acknowledged that the current model presented challenges for some learners, requiring multiple resits and potentially limiting access to T-Levels. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring students acquire essential English and Maths skills, recognising their significance for future opportunities. However, it was agreed that any prospective reforms should maintain high standards while offering greater flexibility to accommodate varying student needs and learning pathways.

It was noted to the Board that the College had incorporated supplementary questions into its destination tracking surveys. The responses provided valuable qualitative insights into the long-term influence of education on students' careers and lives. The Board was informed that 61.6% of 16-18-year-olds and

	<p>79.6% of adults reported that what they were currently doing after having left college was relevant to their career path. . When asked if they agreed that the course they had studied was relevant to their future career path, 83.1% of 16-18 students said they agreed, and 92.0% for adults The Board was further informed that, for the first time, students were asked whether their course had a positive impact on their family or community. It was noted that 70% of 16-18-year-olds and 79.8% of adults reported that their education had positively influenced their wider social environment. While the destination data was still being finalised, it was acknowledged that the richness of these qualitative responses provided valuable insights into the broader impact of education beyond individual career outcomes. The Board welcomed the findings and inquired about the methodology used to measure the impact on family and community, seeking clarification on whether the results were anecdotal or systematically gathered. It was clarified that the responses were based on students' perceptions, making them qualitative, but aligned with the College's broader commitment to education as a transformative force. The Board recognised the opportunity to refine data collection by incorporating questions that captured specific examples of community impact, such as inspiring younger siblings to pursue education or encouraging family involvement in volunteering.</p> <p>The Board acknowledged the importance of measuring societal impact and suggested expanding data collection to identify tangible examples of social change driven by students. It was further noted that destination tracking efforts were already of a high standard, and enhancing this approach would position the College at the forefront of educational impact research.</p> <p>Action: Vice Principal Quality</p> <p>The Board was informed that Ofsted was consulting on a new framework, set to take effect in November, with updates to be provided at future meetings. It was noted that the 12-week consultation period was underway, and the Board agreed that the College should submit a formal response to represent Greater Manchester's educational priorities. A coordinated, group-wide contribution was being prepared, and the Board expressed interest in reviewing the final submission.</p> <p>Action: Vice Principal Quality</p> <p>The Board noted the Quality Update Paper-</p>
	<p>BREAK FROM 12:00PM TO 12:10PM</p>
8	<p>Equality Diversity and Inclusion- UPDATE ON TMC ACTION PLAN</p> <p>The Board was informed that the report provided insights into staff and student data, highlighting areas for further development, particularly regarding colleague data, which currently needed expansion to sufficient depth to enable a comprehensive understanding of staffing demographics. The report also outlined ongoing initiatives, including tutorial delivery, student voice programs, and professional development activities. A 12-hour EDI awareness training program had been successfully delivered to senior and group managers, with plans to tailor a program for middle managers based on feedback from the initial sessions. The Board acknowledged the progress made with the EDI framework and recognised the significance of the newly established LTE Group Board EDI Committee. It was requested that the terms of reference be circulated or presented at the next meeting to clarify its impact on existing EDI initiatives. It was confirmed that the terms of reference had been approved by the LTE Group Board and remain flexible to accommodate adjustments as the committee evolves.</p> <p>Action: Company Secretary and General Counsel.</p> <p>The Board emphasised that the new EDI Governance Committee should be seen as a mechanism for strengthening and formalising the College's ongoing EDI efforts, and those across the LTE Group rather than a response to an identified issue. Strengthening partnerships with external organisations that uphold similar inclusivity standards was also highlighted. The Board concluded that EDI was an ongoing principle,</p>

not a project with a defined endpoint, and continuous improvement remains central to the College's culture and strategic priorities.

The Board, recognised that while student-focused initiatives were well-established, the development of a new HR dashboard was highlighted, aimed at providing greater clarity on workforce demographics to guide targeted strategies for recruitment, support, and staff development. The Board inquired about the possibility of including a dedicated session on EDI at the upcoming strategy days in May

Action: Company Secretary and General Counsel.

The Board noted that the College workforce demographics showed an alignment to the population profile of Greater Manchester but not yet to Manchester. It was emphasised that aligning staff diversity with student demographics would enhance inclusivity and representation, allowing students to see themselves reflected in teaching and leadership roles. It was acknowledged that role models and representation were crucial in fostering an inclusive environment where both staff and students felt valued and supported. The Board emphasised the importance of long-term succession planning in further education, particularly in encouraging students to return as educators. The Chair proposed a "grow your own" model to address recruitment challenges and improve workforce sustainability, acknowledging that flexibility in employment pathways may be needed in some curriculum areas. It was noted that teacher pay, and conditions remained a challenge, with government-led pay settlements playing a key role in supporting recruitment.

The Principal highlighted that while workforce data broadly reflected the demographics of Greater Manchester, there was a lack of trend analysis, making it challenging to assess progress in diversifying staff. The Board acknowledged the need for a more detailed dataset to gain better insights into local recruitment patterns and support more effective strategic workforce planning. The Board was informed that the new EDI LTE governance structure would enhance oversight and accountability, reinforcing that EDI should be a Group-wide priority, integrated across all operational areas.

In discussion the following points were made:

- while existing student voice mechanisms effectively captured general trends, there was an opportunity to gain more granular insights into disparities across specific curriculum areas
- skills, experience and qualifications were required for teaching roles, however, teaching training and 'tools to teach' programmes
- further work to analyse student outcomes by demographic factors would be helpful
- a comprehensive data strategy across the LTE Group was recognised as a crucial step in shaping future initiatives

The Board inquired about the progress of the enrichment programme, acknowledging that increasing student participation in extracurricular activities was a challenging target. The Board sought updates on whether efforts to enhance engagement had led to tangible improvements and how participation levels were being measured. The Board inquired about the progress of the enrichment programme, noting the challenge of increasing student participation. The Board was informed that the reshaped enrichment team had focused on capturing extracurricular activities beyond the standard curriculum, resulting in improved participation rates. Engagement reached 52.2% by Term One, compared to 59.2% for the full year last year. Efforts to encourage students to explore new interests, such as cultural events and sports activities, had been successful. Feedback collected via Microsoft Forms shaped the enrichment offer to better align with student interests. Future priorities included fundraising events with Manchester City Council and UNICEF, and a proposed student visit to Bali. It was reported that there had been nearly 4,000 occurrences of students participating in sports-based enrichment, including gym sessions, netball, football, volleyball, and badminton, primarily at the Openshaw campus, where facilities were most accessible. However, efforts had also been made to facilitate sports activities for ESOL students, including football sessions at the Nicholls campus

	<p>The Chair noted that while engagement in enrichment activities was improving, the next step was to capture the broader impact on student development, community building, and well-being. While participation remained a personal choice, efforts would focus on tracking long-term trends and the benefits gained by students. The Board acknowledged the progress in expanding opportunities and increasing engagement.</p> <p>The Board noted the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Paper</p>
9	<p>PERFORMANCE REPORT</p> <p>Staff/HR Data</p> <p>The Board was informed that, from a staff turnover and well-being perspective, there were no significant concerns to report. It was noted that staff turnover had improved considerably, while sickness levels remained low, with only a slight increase in long-term absences. Health and safety aspects related to this increase were being monitored.</p> <p>Staff Pulse Survey</p> <p>The Board was informed of the staff engagement survey results, which demonstrated an increase in participation and positive improvements across most areas. Staff reported a strong alignment with the College’s mission, leadership values, and a supportive workplace culture, with notable progress in well-being and managerial support. The only area showing a slight decline was staff comfort in sharing concerns, which was acknowledged as a naturally variable metric. In comparison to the TES Schools Wellbeing Survey, the College’s engagement scores were higher in key areas, offering valuable insights despite the differences between school and College settings.</p> <p>The Board inquired whether any benchmarking data existed for Colleges specifically. It was explained that the Department for Education (DfE) had recently introduced College staff surveys, which had been circulated among staff members. It was anticipated that, in time, benchmarking data might emerge from this initiative, but at present, no such dataset existed. The Board inquired about the staff engagement and well-being assessment methodologies used by the larger College groups. It was suggested that exploring their approaches could offer valuable insights and serve as an informal benchmark. Additionally, it was noted that if the Association of Colleges (AoC) provided more targeted support in this area, a sector-wide benchmark could potentially be developed.</p> <p>Action: Principal</p> <p>The Board acknowledged the need to revisit the framing of certain survey questions to enhance clarity and relevance. It was noted that neutral responses might reflect a lack of understanding rather than indifference. The Board recognised that the survey was a work in progress, and refinements to question wording and structure were being considered. The Board was informed that the question on sharing feelings was retained from the TES survey to track trends over time, with the intent to gauge the presence of a supportive professional culture, even if not all staff may feel the need to share personal concerns. The Board acknowledged that individuals may interpret workplace structures and interactions differently based on personal experiences, neurodiversity, and workplace expectations. The Board emphasised the importance of considering these diverse perspectives when designing future surveys.</p> <p>Overview of Student Recruitment 2024/25 (Travel to Learn Pattern)</p> <p>The Board was informed of an analysis comparing current and previous year’s travel-to-learn data. It was noted that 80% of Level 1 learners aged 16-18 were within 30 minutes of their campus, with an increase in travel distances observed for entry-level learners in the 0–5-mile range. Level 3 learners continued to travel the furthest, a trend consistent with past years. Adult entry-level learners traveled the shortest distances, while Level 1 adult learners, particularly ESOL students, traveled further. The ESOL team had</p>

worked to align learners with the campuses nearest their residences, with ongoing reviews planned throughout the academic year.

The Board inquired about the anticipated growth at a specific campus and discussed the closure of Shina Simon Campus which would lead to shifts in student distribution, but additional growth was anticipated in areas not currently accounted for. The Board acknowledged student feedback regarding public transport accessibility.

The Board further inquired whether significant movement of provision had occurred as a result of these campus changes. It was explained that adjustments had been made to maximise the 16-18 student capacity across multiple sites. The original strategy curriculum clusters remained in place. It was noted that while the overall curriculum strategy remained consistent, the College had assessed whether certain provision clusters could be shifted to different campuses to optimise capacity and maintain accessibility. The Board recognised the importance of this structured approach, ensuring cohesion in provision while responding to student demand, travel feasibility, and local demographic shifts.

Finance- Management Accounts

The Board was informed that the College's financial position remained strong and stable, with overall performance meeting expectations, ensuring confidence in financial sustainability. The Chair commended the team's efforts and confirmed that senior leadership, including the Chief Executive, was satisfied with the financial outlook. The Board was also updated on the staff pay award that had been agreed with trade unions alongside a raise in the starting salary for teachers. The Board discussed the government's review of pay disparities between schoolteachers and FE teachers, noting that while it was in the early stages, the expectation was that future action would hopefully address the historical pay gap. The Board commended the College's proactive approach, recognising the long-term challenges in FE teacher pay and its preparedness for future developments.

Health & Safety

The Board noted the updates as provided in the paper.

Estates Strategy

The Board was informed that the City Campus extension remained ahead of schedule and within budget, though student use would begin in September. The Board commended the team's progress and operational planning, including space optimisation and timetable adjustments for staff and students. Transition planning for relocating students and staff from other campuses was underway, with preferences for campus assignments being considered. Lessons learned from phase one had been applied to phase two, including additional staff rooms. The Board was assured that the summer period would allow staff and students to familiarise themselves with the new facilities. The Board discussed the possibility of holding a future meeting at the new campus, with plans for a site visit in May and a focus on ensuring all members were informed about remote access limitations. The proposal was welcomed, emphasising the value of firsthand engagement with the facilities.

Action: Governance Team

Safeguarding

The Board was informed of the positive impact of the student universal health and well-being team, particularly in addressing mental health referrals, the highest category. The establishment of a dedicated emotional health and well-being team had improved support, allowing safeguarding and pastoral teams to focus on their respective areas. The team's clear structure, with three specialist roles, ensured targeted support for students. The Board noted efforts to encourage male student engagement, as referral rates remained lower, including the introduction of a guest speaker on men's mental health and resilience. The

	Chair commended the progress in student well-being, recognising the College's commitment to enhancing support with specialist roles. The Board acknowledged the substantial advancements made and expressed appreciation for the ongoing efforts in safeguarding and mental health support.
10	<p>TMC COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS REPORT 2023/24</p> <p>The Board was informed that the number of complaints for the 2023–2024 academic year remained stable despite an increase in student numbers, reflecting the College's effective management of concerns. The report highlighted both complaints and formal compliments, although it was acknowledged that not all compliments were captured through formal channels, with plans to improve this process moving forward. The Board noted improvements in complaints management, including the quality team's quarterly reviews and the stakeholder voice team's efforts to better recognise and celebrate compliments. While trends in complaints remained consistent, particularly within the business faculty, these issues had been addressed. Regarding feedback collection, it was noted that TMC and UCEN followed a unified methodology, although some divisions may have separate processes. The Board emphasised the importance of a consistent approach across the Group for collecting, analysing, and presenting both positive and negative feedback and agreed that further exploration of this matter would be beneficial for policy development.</p>
11	<p>TMC COMPLAINTS POLICY</p> <p>The Board was informed that the Complaints Policy for the 2025–2026 academic year was presented for approval. A key change was the removal of the term "student" from the title, making it applicable to all individuals connected to the College. Minor amendments were also made, including updates for clarity, responsibilities at Stage One, and statements on accessibility and safeguarding. The complaints process was explained, with Stage Two typically handled by a manager, Stage Three by a panel, and Stage Four overseen by Principalship. Disciplinary matters were dealt with separately, and staff concerns were addressed via HR policies. In cases involving senior managers, a governor might be assigned as an independent investigator, ensuring sufficient independence. Complainants could escalate cases to external bodies like the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if necessary.</p> <p>The Board RESOLVED to approve the TMC and UCEN Compliments and Complaints Policy</p>
	<p>SIGNED (CHAIR)..... DATED</p>

Meeting closed at 13:33pm