



**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE HSDC CORPORATION  
HELD ON THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2025  
COMMITTEE ROOM (134), SOUTH DOWNS CAMPUS  
OR REMOTE ACCESS VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Mike Bateman	Keryn Landey ( <i>remote</i> )
Stella Charman ( <i>remote</i> )	Elsbeth Mackeggie Gurney
Clive Dobbin (Chair)	Kamlesh Pandya
Mike Gaston (Principal)	Mike Tiller
Lorna Hayes ( <i>remote</i> )	Penny Wycherley ( <i>remote</i> )
Romy Jones	(2 x vacancies: 1 x student, 1 x external (TW))

**In attendance:**

Suki Dhesi – DP Curriculum & Quality  
Jackie Eayrs – Clerk to the Corporation

<b>Total Membership</b>	18
<b>Total vacancies</b>	2 (YKD/TW)
<b>Total possible attendance</b>	16
<b>Quorum:</b>	8
<b>Total Present:</b>	11 - meeting quorate (69% attendance excl. vacs)

Minute Number	Minute	Action
<b>HSDC CORP 55/25</b>	<p><b>Apologies for Absence &amp; Welcome:</b> The additional special meeting of the Corporation had been convened to review the 24/25 student outcomes, to receive a verbal update on the discussions at the most recent SPA Steering Group meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2025 and for External Governors to consider and ratify the appointment of an interim Principal &amp; CEO effective from January 2026.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all members present to the meeting, in particular Keryn Landey and Penny Wycherley who were both attending their first meeting of the Board. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ian Child, Simon Claridge, Melanie Luck, James Stefanaras and Donna Wearn.</p>	
<b>HSDC CORP 56/25</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b> – Governors were reminded of their duty to declare an interest, financial or otherwise, in any item on the agenda. No member declared any conflict of interest with any item on the agenda which had not previously been declared.</p>	
<b>HSDC CORP 57/25</b>	<p><b>Review of the 24/25 Student Outcomes:</b> Members of the Corporation received a report of Student Outcomes 2024/2025 which provided summary analysis of outcomes across all 3 campuses with comparison to national benchmarks.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal C&amp;Q, Suki Dhesi (SD), spoke to the report and advised members that, overall, it was good news, and the 24/25 data had returned to stronger outcome levels than those achieved in 2018/2019. In particular, she drew the following key points to members' attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>High Grades</b> - An increase in High Grades (A*-B grades) of 14%. SD stated that an increase of 10% had been predicted but the 14% increase had exceeded expectations. She added that this had been achieved by staff working hard around the principles of</li> </ul>	

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	<p>learning and the use of OneGrade which had led to precise monitoring and support being provided to students where it was most needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>High Grades by campus</b> – SD advised that there had been a consistent increase across all 3 campuses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- South Downs – 53.8% (increased from 31.1% in 23/24). SD stated that the increase had been achieved through individualised monitoring of every student.</li> <li>- Alton – 50.5% (increased from 31% in 23/24)</li> <li>- Havant – 49.3% (increased from 41.3% in 23/24). SD stated that the high grade percentage at Havant had already been high at 41.3% in 23/24 and, therefore, there had been less of an increase on this campus in 24/25.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Very High Grades</b> - An increase in Very High Grades (A*-A grades) of 4% to 22.2% (18.2% in 23/24).</li> <li>• <b>Very High Grades by campus</b> – SD highlighted the fact that these grades were the most difficult to achieve. The most significant increase had been seen at the Alton campus, followed by South Downs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alton – 22.2% (increased from 14.7% in 23/24)</li> <li>- South Downs – 24.4% (increased from 19.2% in 23/24)</li> <li>- Havant – 20.9% (increased from 19.9% in 23/24)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Overall College Pass Rate</b> - The College pass rate remained strong at 96.1% (96.2% in 23/24)</li> <li>• <b>Overall Pass Rates by campus:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- South Downs: 99.8% (93.2% in 23/24). SD stated that this was an impressive increase.</li> <li>- Havant: 94.7% (96.8% in 23/24)</li> <li>- Alton: 95.3% (95.7% in 23/24).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Members reviewed and noted data around individual subject outcomes. SD highlighted the fact that 100% pass rate had been achieved for many subjects. There had only been two surprises, Engineering T Level at Alton (3 U grades despite close tracking/pass rate 62%) and A Level PE at Alton (66% pass rate). Members were advised that strategies had been put in place to secure improvement in 25/26.</li> <li>• <b>T Level Outcomes</b> – SD advised that T Level outcomes had improved overall by 6.4% and Very High Grades had improved by nearly 15%. In particular, members were advised that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alton pass rate was 100% with South Downs close behind at 99.8%.</li> <li>- There had been 100% pass rate across 119 T Level students at the South Downs campus.</li> <li>- Excellent Education and Childcare T Level outcomes (100% pass rate and 40% High Grades across both Alton and South Downs) including one Distinction* at Alton (only 20 awarded in the country) and 9 Distinctions across Alton and South Downs.</li> <li>- Good outcomes for the new Design Surveying &amp; Planning for Construction T Level with 4 Distinctions and 100% pass rate.</li> <li>- Distinction* grades across a range of qualifications including Business at Alton and Animal Management, Forensic Science, Football Academy and Sports Development &amp; Coaching.</li> <li>- Five Distinction* grades in Football Academy, three Distinction* grades in Sports Development and four Distinction* grades in Forensic Science. SD emphasised the fact that these were the highest grades possible nationally.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Comparison with National Data:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>A Level Results</b> – Members noted that HSDC was in line with the national overall pass rate (grades A*-E) for A Level outcomes.</li> <li>- <b>National Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs)</b> – The overall T Level pass rate had risen to 91.4% nationally, however, HSDC had achieved 97.8%.</li> <li>- <b>Diploma Vocational Qualifications</b> (equivalent to 3 A Levels) national rate was 98% with HSDC achieving an impressive 99.7%. In addition, HSDC high grades had increased from 35.4% to 68.3% which was in line with the national rate of 72%.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Strategic Target QAR</b> – SD advised members that the QAR strategic target included within the new Strategic Plan, Ambition 30, had been set at 86% to be achieved by 2030. She went on to say that the College had already achieved 85%, which had exceeded the internal College target. Therefore, the strategic target for 2030 would need to be revised.</li> </ul>	<p>Action: ELT</p>

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	<p>She added that Level 2 results, which were still coming in, could impact the final QAR and could potentially reduce it by 1%. However, it was envisaged that the Level 2 results would not massively impact the final QAR result.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>GCSE Results:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>GCSE English</b> had declined by 2.5% overall due to staff absence issues at the South Downs campus. The national resit GCSE English rate was noted as 20.9% with HSDC overall being higher at 33%. SD advised that the prediction had been 35% which had been disappointing. Despite best efforts to cover, there had been some impact due to staffing issues at the South Downs campus.</li> <li>- <b>GCSE Maths</b> had improved overall by 5.8% due to improvements at South Downs and Alton. There had been a decline at the Havant campus although it was noted there had been few students which minimised the impact. The national resit GCSE Maths rate was noted as 17.1% with HSDC overall being higher at 25.8%. SD advised that this was in line with the prediction.</li> <li>- SD advised that there had been some good press coverage about HSDC exceeding the national averages.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● SD advised members that there was a new Head of Faculty for cross-College English and Maths, being managed by the Head of Teaching and Learning, who was having a positive impact already. There were a number of strategies in place that would lead to improved attendance which would improve outcomes in 2026, these included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved focus on relational practice</li> <li>- Students knowing each other so wanting to attend</li> <li>- Improved focus on mastery maths (ETF project)</li> <li>- Improved focus on in-year tracking through OneGrade</li> <li>- Improved staffing coverage through the Quality Team providing absence cover to help boost results.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>SD concluded by saying that, overall, the results demonstrated that staff had worked incredibly hard to support their students. The results were more consistent both within and across campuses compared to the previous year which demonstrated the impact of positive teaching and learning strategies. In addition, the use of the OneGrade value added system to track and monitor all courses twice a year had enabled managers to see exactly where to focus their efforts with their teams of staff and with individual students.</p> <p>The Principal thanked the DP C&amp;Q for her report and reminded Governors of the context of where the College had been over the course of the last year and the challenges faced by staff in respect of the restructuring and organisational change. To achieve such results, despite those challenges, was a testament to the staff and their commitment to their students and it was a very positive outcome for the College.</p> <p>Governors discussed the results presented and the following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Value-Added</b> – Governors sought clarity on the number of students that had enrolled with low GCSE grades and the value added provided by the College to help them achieve. Governors also sought clarity on how the value-added scores compared against other GFE colleges. The DP C&amp;Q responded by saying that HSDC had moved away from ALPs and was now using OneGrade which used DfE data. This information included every student in England that had taken a GCSE and Ofsted used it. She went on to say that the averages provided were for FE and she would be sharing the data in due course, but it had only been received that day.</li> <li>● <b>GCSE Resits</b> – Having seen some publicity during the week, members requested an update on the future of GCSE resits. SD responded by saying that there was currently consultation regarding whether GCSE resits were fit for purpose. She added that, for HSDC students, some were taking a resit for the third time which was very demoralising for them. SD went on to say that the College had to put students in for the GCSE and were not allowed to put them on Functional Skills as this would result in a clawback. There was a general feeling that there had to be a different qualification which included broadening Functional Skills as an option.</li> <li>● <b>T Level Engineering Alton</b> – Members questioned whether there had been any particular staffing issues at Alton which had contributed to the disappointing outcome. SD confirmed that there hadn't been any staffing issues, but the level of recruitment had</li> </ul>	

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	<p>been lower than hoped. She added that one of the 3 U grade students had applied for a re-mark, and it was anticipated that student would pass which would push the stats up into the 70% bracket. This meant that two students had not passed the T Level. SD advised members that the Engineering T Level was extremely challenging. The Principal added that the T Level was a minimum equivalent of 3 A Levels and it was one of the toughest qualifications the College delivered, particularly with the Industry Placement element. If students were also working part-time alongside that and, in some cases, were also retaking English and/or Maths, this demonstrated the high level of commitment that was required by students who opted for the T Level. In addition, the College outcomes supported the fact that students should have achieved their GCSE English and Maths before commencing the course. Governors sought clarification on the entry profile of the 3 students that had achieved U grades compared to the rest of the cohort. SD confirmed that the cohort had predominantly been at the entry requirements. Governors also expressed interest in the number of students that had only completed 'intermediate' English and Maths in that cohort and commented that some form of 'bridge' to the GCSE could be explored. SD responded by saying that this was a resource issue. The College would have to invest in additional staffing to establish this, and the pay budget was at capacity. The Staff Governor echoed the words of the Principal and stated that the T Level was a massive commitment, delivered over 4 or 5 days full-time. However, it was a good qualification to achieve. He went on to say that he had been talking to students and some had achieved a distinction in Level 2 but they could not progress onto the Level 3 as they had not achieved a Grade 4 or above in English and/or Maths, which was heart breaking. Members noted that, where students had been 'lost', they had gone to colleges which continued to offer the BTEC qualification where entry requirements were lower.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members questioned what would happen to the U Grade students who had effectively studied for 2 years and had nothing at the end of it. SD advised members that there was accreditation for constituent parts of the qualification. She also added that some students were progressing onto employment, and the College supported them to develop a portfolio.</li> <li>• Governors questioned how the College compared to its local competitors. SD advised members that the only information available on competitors was what they had published themselves in the national arena. On that basis, HSDC outcomes were in line with competitors, and the overall pass rate was in line with national levels. SD went on to say that the T Level outcome was very strong at 99.7% and the DfE had contacted the College regarding 'good news' stories.</li> <li>• Governors were aware of the impact that the demographic profile of Leigh Park might have on achievement, not just in terms of value added, but in terms of other challenges those students might face, i.e. carers, single parents etc. Members expressed interest in reviewing some data related to that element. The Principal advised members that a report was presented to Governors in terms of the range of support that was provided to students, including those from areas of high deprivation and those that were young carers and how the College had been successful in supporting those students. He went on to provide a case study of a student that had spent time in prison but had still been supported by the College to achieve his qualification. He added that this was a prime example of the kind of work many of the HSDC staff were engaged with and it demonstrated the power of education.</li> </ul> <p>At the end of the discussion, the Chair acknowledged that the student outcomes, overall, were strong and for the College to achieve the results it had within the context of the organisational restructure etc. was impressive. He also acknowledged that the strong increase in High and Very High Grades had put the College back to 18/19 pre-Covid levels and staff should be congratulated. He went on to say that OneGrade had helped with targeted intervention, but he sought clarity on how accurate the College had been at predicting the grades achieved. SD responded by saying that the report on variants was yet to be received but the last prediction had taken place in April 2025 which meant that staff predictions had been within 5-6% of the final outcomes. Any staff outside of that threshold would receive training.</p>	

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	<b>Members of the Board reviewed, discussed and noted the contents of the report and the College's positive student outcomes for 2024/2025.</b>	
<b>HSDC CORP 58/25</b>	<b>SPA Steering Group Update:</b>  The Chair of Corporation, Clive Dobbin, provided members with a verbal update on the discussions and actions agreed at the recent SPA Steering Group meeting (no.3) which had taken place on 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2025. Due to the confidential nature of the contents of the verbal report, this minute is recorded as a separate confidential minute for Governors only.	
<b>HSDC CORP 59/25</b>	<b>Strictly Confidential Item - Appointment of Interim Principal &amp; Chief Executive Officer:</b> <i>(Staff and Student Governors and Executive Officers withdrew for this item).</i>  External Governors received a strictly confidential report on the Appointment of an Interim Principal & CEO. Due to the strictly confidential nature of the contents of the report and the related discussions, this item is recorded as a strictly confidential minute for external governors only.	
<b>HSDC CORP 60/25</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b> – Members noted that, in accordance with the Corporation Calendar 25/26 approved on the 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2025, the next meeting of the Corporation was scheduled to take place on <b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2026 at 16.45 hrs at the Alton campus.</b>	

**There being no other business, the meeting closed at 18.07 hrs**

**Signed:** .....

**Date:**.....