

Entrepreneurial Case Studies

Case Study 2: Moulton College



Key Feature

The College's commercial enterprises contribute to over 11% of the College's annual turnover of nearly £28.5m.

Background Information

Moulton College is unique in its approach to education in training, in that all students who study full-time in Further and Higher Education complete the "Moulton College Award". To achieve an award and be awarded a certificate, the students must complete a nationally-recognised, vocational qualification, skills for life qualifications that are appropriate to their learning and level, additional qualifications pursuant with their chosen vocation, and demonstrate appropriate employability skills. Students must complete a designated amount of commercial experience that has been assessed to the appropriate standard, as determined by that student's level of study. To this end, full time students will be trained far in excess of the number of the maximum number of funded guided learning hours per annum (Moulton courses are typically taught over four weekdays, with a fifth day of commercial or work experience). This equates to over 1,000 guided learning hours per year, plus the supervision received within college's commercial enterprises.

Instilling enterprise and entrepreneurship across the organisation

The ethos of Moulton, to train and produce students who are "work-ready" is underpinned by the college's own commercial enterprises, which include:

- the Garden Centre, including nursery, florists and pet store;
- a 656Ha Farm including arable, dairy, sheep, beef and calf-rearing enterprises;
- an Animal Therapy Centre including dog grooming, hydrotherapy and massage services;
- a Sports Facilities including sports halls, a climbing wall, fitness suite, grass and artificial pitches, hard courts and a golf driving range;
- an Equestrian Enterprise including livery yard, ménages, cross-country course and competition centre; and

- an Equine Therapy Centre including a swimming pool, hydrotherapy spa, aqua treadmill and solarium

Enterprising approaches to business development and income generation

These enterprises are operated by commercial managers with recent experience within the wider industry. All businesses operate the expected hours of business, and, as such, are not limited to academic hours / year. To this end, the college's enterprises are open to the public or operating during evenings and weekends, and where appropriate, students will undertake commercial experience at these times which are sometimes outside of the normal college day. Benefits to students include preparation for work, including realistic working hours, practical skills development and wider employability skills. However, it must also be noted that students are briefed and included as part of the commercial team and assigned roles within those teams (which may include the supervision of others if that is appropriate to their level of learning).

Enterprise in the Curriculum

At the end of any period of commercial experience that is undertaken, students will have received objective, written feedback from the commercial staff on a standard proforma covering:

- their health, safety and personal presentation;
- responsiveness and time management;
- conduct and professionalism in the commercial environment;
- commercial progression; and
- meeting commercial standards.

Impact

As students work alongside members of staff within these businesses, students are exposed to all aspects of commercial operation. This can include access to the business accounts, which in work experience organized externally to the college, would normally be classified as sensitive information. This can enable students to fully appreciate the impact that business decisions and working practices can have upon income and profit margins. The college's commercial enterprises contribute to over 11% of the college's annual turnover of nearly £28.5m.

