

MORLEY COLLEGE

Research and Scholarship Policy

**POLICY OWNER: HEAD OF QUALITY AND STANDARDS
COMMITTEE: POLICY COMMITTEE
LAST APPROVAL: FEBRUARY 2018
NEXT REVIEW: FEBRUARY 2021**

Equality Analysis Screening

Equality analysis is a way of considering the effects on different groups protected from discrimination by the equality act. Consider if there are any risks within this policy that will adversely affect a particular group or a variety of groups. Are there any changes that need to be made to the policy its self or additional actions that need to be made to mitigate the risks?

The protected characteristics are:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Religion and Belief
- Maternity and Pregnancy
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

Has this Policy been identified as requiring an Equality Analysis Screening [YES]?

This would need to be discussed and agreed with the Quality and Standards Manager and the Head of Human Resources. If one is required they will recommend who is involved and how this should be done.

Risks identified: None

Evidence used (data, consultation): Policy Committee Consultation

Does this policy need a further action before it can be approved? NO
(changes made to policy or further equality analysis needed)

MORLEY COLLEGE

Scholarship and Research Policy

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

“Scholarship and research lie at the heart of higher education, but their nature will depend on the academic level of the programme, the subject area and the provider or providers of the programme.

Scholarship may include conventional research (discovery of new knowledge), innovative application or integration of existing knowledge, for example in professional practice, or the study of learning and teaching processes and practices.”

UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality
Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching (page 14)

‘Scholarship’ is a term used to describe engagement in academic study and the knowledge that is obtained from it. The knowledge pursued through scholarship has the potential to ‘open up’ new ways of thinking, critically and analytically. As a consequence, “scholarship and research lie at the heart of higher education” (QAA, 2015, page 14).

The overarching aim of this policy is to support the enhancement of the learning experience for college higher education students in order to support their successful transition to higher-skilled, higher-paid employment within the knowledge economy.

Scholarship should be central to all forms of higher education, whether studied in a university or a college. Underpinning this policy is the view that if the established view of academic scholarship or ‘research’ is re-evaluated for the further education sector, it will be possible to achieve a new perspective on scholarship that will enhance the impact of college higher education for students, staff and employers. This new perspective on scholarship is motivated by employability, higher skills and professional practice, and thereby places scholarship at the heart of college.

The philosophical basis for this reconsideration of scholarship within college higher education draws on the work of the American academic, Ernest Boyer. Boyer’s article ‘Scholarship Reconsidered – priorities of the professoriate’ (1990) encourages an inclusive reinterpretation of scholarship that is an activity relevant not only to ‘academics’ or ‘scholars’ in the traditional sense, but also to students, tutors and managers.

The model of scholarship developed for the Scholarship Project - and further interpreted as the basis for this Scholarship Policy - firstly, and importantly, interconnects the contributions of students, tutors and employers. The model recognises that within successful college higher education there is collaboration between student, tutor and employer. When, for example, a tutor engages in a scholarly activity within college higher education, the activity will usually be designed to enhance students’ progress in meeting the higher skills needs of employers. Similarly, when an employer engages in a scholarly activity to address a specific operational challenge, student and staff awareness of the employer’s context is deepened. This enhanced awareness of the workplace context in turn enhances the relevancy of college higher education in supporting students’ preparedness for the transition into higher skilled employment. In short, there is co-

dependency of student, tutor and employer, focused on employability and economic productivity.

This interpretation of Boyer's model, through the co-dependency of student, tutor and employer, inspires the college community to celebrate the distinctiveness of college higher education and to embrace a new practical perspective on scholarship. We are encouraged to recognise scholarship as being a feature of college life - part of the day-to-day pattern of college higher education - of importance to the whole college community, and no longer viewing scholarship as the preserve of an 'academic elite'.

This inclusive, motivating approach to student, staff and employer engagement in scholarly activity is further supported through a definition of four forms of scholarship, drawing further on Boyer's original model. The four forms of scholarship are cyclical, and their inclusiveness arises from the flexibility of access to the cycle: all forms of engagement in scholarly activity will find a place on the cycle. Further reflection of the question(s) relating to the scholarships of integration, application, and teaching, has the potential to encourage the 'scholar' to develop and extend their thinking to the next adjacent form of scholarship.

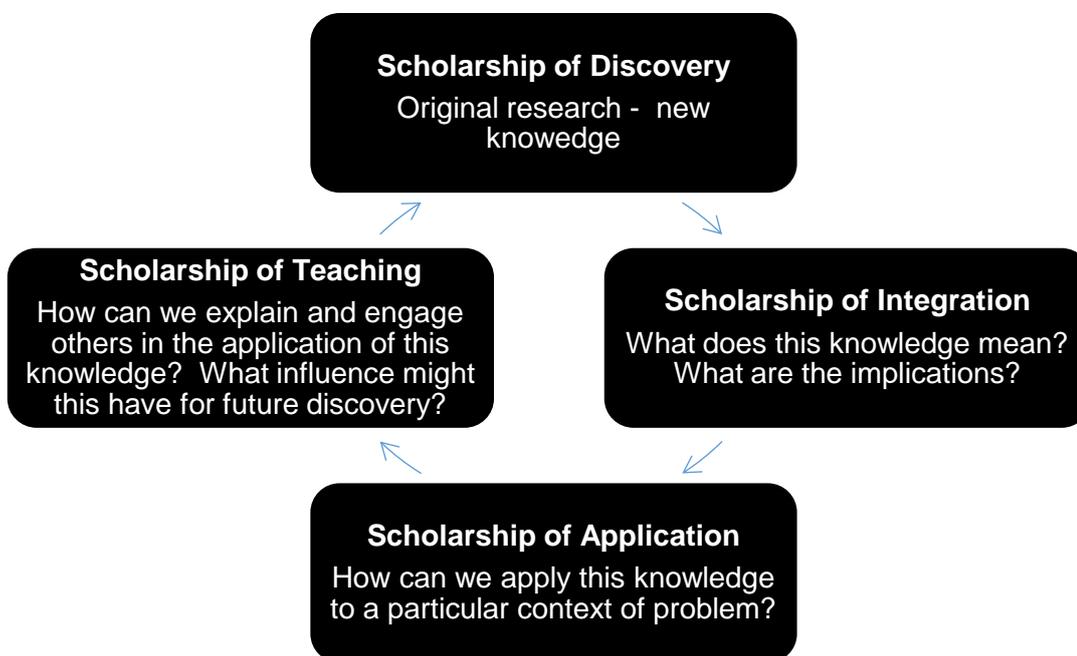


Figure 1: College higher education (CHE) scholarship model

2. MORLEY COLLEGE IN CONTEXT

The purpose of the scholarship 'agenda' established by this policy is to challenge staff, students and employers to engage in scholarly activities that arise from a need to address practical challenges relevant to the workplace. In this context, it is anticipated that our approach to scholarship will be 'action-oriented', with scholarly activities designed to solve practical workplace problems and/or to provide insight on best practice in professional practice.

In summary, the purpose of this Scholarship Policy is to define and describe how Morley College will engage in scholarship as a vital feature of its college higher education.

The rationale for this policy is that a distinct college higher education scholarly ethos will have impact for the:

- **Student** in enhancing their learning, supporting their achievement and contributing to their employability
- **Tutor** in enhancing their effectiveness through the application of the outcomes of scholarship within their professional practice
- **Manager** in ensuring the meeting of the expectations of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, specifically in relation to Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching; Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement; and Chapter B5: Student Engagement
- **Employer** in ensuring the increased readiness of students as future employees, ready to make the transition to working life in higher-skilled roles.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Scholarship lies at the heart of college higher education;
- 3.2 The College is committed to providing exceptional higher education opportunities, seeking to meet the needs of the communities it serves;
- 2.3 The term ‘scholarship’ is to be reconsidered as inclusive to college higher education students, staff and employer partners, and designed to address practical challenges relevant to professional practice;
- 2.4 Scholarship encompasses a wide range of activities, but all scholarly activities have two common features: they apply or integrate sector-specific knowledge within a professional context and they result in a defined output or product;
- 2.5 In order to animate engagement in scholarship within our college community, implementation of this policy will be communicated through a simple, core message relevant to all forms of college higher education scholarship: “what’s the question?” Students, tutors and managers are encouraged to adopt an evidence-based approach: asking, evidence gathering, exploring, testing and evaluating.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The overarching aim of the Scholarship Policy is to enhance the achievement and progression of higher education students.

Working within the context of the Policy Statement set out above (section 3), the overarching aim of the Policy will be achieved through the following five policy objectives:

- Objective 1 Awareness** To promote the distinctive purpose and impact of scholarship within college higher education amongst students, staff and employer partners;
- Objective 2 Curriculum Design** To enhance the relevancy of curriculum design through an evidence-based understanding of current and future industry needs;
- Objective 3 Students as Partners** To integrate scholarship within learning, teaching and assessment through a common interest in the practical challenges of the workplace shared between student and tutor;

Objective 4: Quality Enhancement To pursue opportunities for innovation in the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practice through systematic programme review, involving employer partners;

Objective 5: Professional Development To motivate active participation in scholarly activity by higher education teaching staff through professional development aligned to the UKPSF.

5. SCOPE OF POLICY

Given the policy objectives above (section 4), the Scholarship Policy is relevant to all managers with responsibility for curriculum, quality and organisational development, including Human Resources. The Policy is also relevant to college higher education students and to employer partners.

More specifically, the Policy applies directly to those staff involved directly in the teaching and management of college higher education, specifically including all tutors and higher education programme directors/leaders.

7. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION

The Higher Education Sub-Committee has responsibility for the implementation of the Policy, with membership of the Committee configured in order to ensure effective communication with programme teams, as well as managers associated with the scholarship agenda including Quality and Standards, Student Services, Learning Resources, Human Resources and Employer partnerships.

The Higher Education Sub-Committee will provide a steer to managers on any specific areas of priority for scholarship, but otherwise it is for higher education tutors and programme directors/leaders to pursue their interests in ways that address the policy objectives set out in section 4, above.

Progress in the implementation of the Policy will be tracked through the use of quantitative and qualitative data. A set of scholarship performance indicators, supported by annual programme-level self-assessment reports, stakeholder feedback and case study reports, will provide an evidence base to inform the management action required to ensure effective implementation of the Policy.

Indicative scholarship performance indicators include:

- higher education student retention, attendance and achievement;
- student destination to employment (Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey);
- % of higher education lesson observations featuring scholarly activity;
- % of higher education teaching staff having completed a scholarship activity with a defined output;
- % of higher education staff teaching having achieved Associate Fellow or Fellow status of the Higher Education Academy.

In addition, qualitative evidence includes:

- Higher Education Programme-Level APMRs
- External Examiner feedback

- Employer feedback
- Student feedback
- Specific case study / project reports on the impact of scholarship in relation to Policy Objectives 1 – 5.

As stated within the Policy Statement, above (Section 2, point 2.3), scholarship is to be reconsidered as inclusive to college higher education students, staff and employer partners, and designed to address practical challenges relevant to professional practice. Consequently, there is a wide-range of activities this policy recognises as scholarship, purposefully including activities that are part of day-to-day professional practice in college higher education.

As indicated in the Policy Statement (section 2, point 2.4) there are two distinguishing features of college higher education scholarship: it applies or integrates sector-specific knowledge within a professional context and it has a defined output or product.

Examples of scholarly activity include:

- A programme or project proposal
- A programme validation document
- Design, delivery and evaluation of an opportunity for scholarship within learning, teaching and assessment (including coursework design)
- Implementation and evaluation of a new teaching technique or associated aspect of professional practice
- An action plan to enhance student progression to industry
- Consultation with employers on industry needs
- Consultancy to industry to advise on a specific issue or area of development
- Academic study resulting in completion of a defined course/programme
- An article or review for an industry publication (online / in print)
- Artistic creativity resulting in exhibition, recording or performance
- Professional accreditation by the Higher Education Academy.

8. Research and Scholarship Ethics

The Higher Education Sub Committee will be responsible for ensuring the diligent recording and approval of scholarly activities that require ethical approval. The College will meet the expectations as set out by the QAA UK Quality code for Higher Education, chapter B11. Research and ethics will be a standing item within the agenda for the sub-committee that meets twice termly.

Academic staff working in HE at the College will receive research ethics training as a part of their Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training. This will be in conjunction with the *HE in FE* model, reflecting Boyer's scholarship of discovery, teaching, integration and application.

Students undertaking a Higher Education programme at the College may study unit (s) which involve applied research, related methods and ethical issues.. Assessments involving members of the public, employers and young people will require students to submit an Ethical Approval Form. Ethical Approval Forms will be recorded, referenced, approved and monitored by the HE Sub-committee.

Programme managers will ensure that all HE academic staff assigned to supervise student research are subject experts with demonstrable experience in research supervision.

In addition the HE Development Co-ordinator may, when appropriate, organise and implement interdisciplinary workshops designed to raise the awareness of methods of applied research.