



# Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on Tuesday 18 November 2025 at 5pm via Teams

**Present:** Patrick Alcantara (*Foundation Governor*)  
Sarah Carroll (*Foundation Governor*)  
Kevin Crooks (*Staff Governor*)  
Janet Gater (*Principal*)  
Mick Martin (*Foundation Governor*) – Chair  
Kieran O’Sullivan (*Associate Member*)  
Rob Peacock (*Foundation Governor*)

**In attendance:** Laura Forsyth (*Vice Principal, Curriculum, Quality & Pastoral*)  
Lauren Boswell (*Assistant Principal, Student Development & Support*)  
Peter Murphy (*Assistant Principal, Quality of Teaching, Learning & Staffing*)  
Liz Walls (*Assistant Principal, Vocational & Super Curriculum*)  
Carmen Nunez (*Dean of Higher Education*)  
Ruth Potter (*Clerk*)

*The Chair welcomed new member, Rob Peacock, to the Committee and opened the meeting in prayer.*

## 1. ROUTINE AND STANDING ITEMS

### 1.1 Declarations of interest

Attendees were invited to declare whether they had any direct or indirect personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any matter which formed part of the agenda for this meeting or was likely to be discussed at this meeting. No declarations were made in addition to those already recorded on the Register of Interests.

### 1.2 Apologies for absence

All members were present. The meeting was declared quorate.

### 1.3 Items to be included under urgent business

There were no items for submission under urgent business.

### 1.4 Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 20 May 2025 (*previously circulated*)

The Part 1 minutes were **approved** and would be signed in accordance with Article 12 (3) of the Articles of Government. The publication of the minutes was authorised in accordance with Article 13 of the Articles of Government.

The Part 2 minutes were **approved** and would be signed in accordance with Article 12 (3) of the Articles of Government.

### 1.5 Matters arising from the minutes (*previously circulated*)

Committee members noted the action log prepared by the clerk.

### 1.6 **Committee risk register** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the extract from the strategic risk register which was included to provide assurance and oversight of the risks specific to the Quality & Standards Committee.

#### **Resolved:**

- **That the Committee Risk Register be received and noted.**

*The Committee agreed to bring forward agenda item 3.3 HE Progress Report for consideration.*

### 3.3 **HE Progress Report** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the HE progress report that had been prepared by the Dean of Higher Education (HE) and invited members' comments and questions. Discussion ensued on the attendance, retention and progression onto HE data. Improvement in the progression rate to HE for Science and Engineering was noted; this was the largest curriculum area in terms of student numbers and hence the increase in progression rate of 11% from last year was significant. Progression onto HE was noted as a concern for the Medicine, Dentistry, DT and Veterinary Science programme; this was a small cohort of students and hence the progression rate was adversely affected by one or two students. The Dean of HE explained the changes implemented to attendance criteria which were expected to yield improvements on future progression rates.

**Q** – Over-recruitment in Engineering: was staffing secured to meet this demand?

**A** – Yes. Engineering programme required completion of two mathematics modules and given large size of College's Maths Department, have been able to meet this demand without difficulty.

**Q** – Was the reduction in A Level practical laboratory experience still proving to be a significant issue for HE students?

**A** – Introduced a scientific skills module for students, delivered in weekly academic advisor sessions, to address this issue. This should have positive impact on practical coursework component scores this year.

**Q** – Change in entry criteria for all programmes noted. What has been changed?

**A** – Previously had allowed students entry onto the HE programmes with Grade 4 in GCSE Maths, however this had not prepared students for the key mathematical functions required on the foundation programme. Therefore, worked with University of Liverpool to change the GCSE Maths requirement to a Grade 5.

The recent DfE policy change on HE funding for institutions delivering under franchise agreements was highlighted alongside the financial implications for the College. Committee members were updated on plans to mitigate the impact of this in the current academic year. Due process was being followed – in liaison with the University of Liverpool – to implement an increase in fees for September 2026 enrolment which would ensure future delivery of the HE programme remained sustainable.

**Q** – HE institutional review: when would this commence?

**A** – The self-evaluation report and associated documents had been submitted. Review meeting due on 1 December 2025.

The Chair thanked the Dean of HE for her report.

**Resolved:**

- **That the HE Progress Report be received and noted.**

*Carmen Nunez left the meeting at this point.*

**2. SAFEGUARDING**

**2.1 Safeguarding Termly Update** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred members to the comprehensive update report prepared by the Assistant Principal (Student Development & Support) and thanked her for the annual safeguarding report and governor training session that had been delivered at the October board meeting. He noted the decrease in logged incidents compared with the previous year and invited the Assistant Principal to comment on the background to this decrease. It was reported that the reduction in incidents was most likely linked to the introduction of the Cedar secure thread as some of the largest reductions were in the categories of communication and information sharing. The Cedar secure thread facilitated the recording of information on issues such as family bereavement or parental separation by the Pastoral Team which did not then necessarily require any action from the Safeguarding Team.

Governor comments and questions were invited on the report.

**Q** – 58 Mental Health recorded incidents; what was the tier breakdown of these?

**A** – Majority of incidents fell into the lower tiers (tier 0 and tier 1), with a reduction of cases in the most serious tiers (tier 2 and tier 3). Full tier breakdown would be provided in the next termly report.

**Q** – Five Prevent incidents logged; what was the resolution to these?

**A** – The five logged incidents related to two students and one single Prevent referral which remained ongoing with Merseyside Police.

**Q** – Small increase in bullying/friendship-related incidents; any concerns about this?

**A** – Larger cohort sizes in both Y12 and Y13 may have been a contributory factor. Incidents mainly related to lower-level friendship-related issues which were addressed quickly in College. Zero tolerance approach taken.

Discussion ensued on whether there was evidence to support the view that students' wellbeing and resilience was returning back to pre-pandemic levels. The Principal confirmed that anecdotally there was evidence to support this view, with students arriving in College having undertaken formal GCSE exams and demonstrating maturity, resilience and a good attitude to study.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for her comprehensive report.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Safeguarding Termly Update Report be received and noted.**

**3. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT**

**3.1 Level 3 Progress Report**

The Chair referred members to the report prepared by the Vice Principal (Curriculum, Quality and Pastoral) which provided student progress data for Common Assessment Point (CAP) 4. It was noted that CAP 1 data was not yet

available and it was agreed that further consideration would be given to the meeting schedule for 2025-26 to ensure that CAP 1 data was available.

Discussion ensued on CAP 4 data which reported a slight dip on previous CAP 3 outcomes as well as a downturn on CAP 4 data from last year's cohort. The Vice Principal indicated that a range of actions had been put in place to secure improvements.

**Q** – Any concerns with downturn in performance in key subject/curriculum areas?

**A** – No specific concerns, however BTEC data showed high proportion of students 'at expected progress' rather than 'above expected progress'. This was most likely due to imminent formal exams in January and a degree of staff caution around CAP grades. The holistic nature of CAP assessment had been emphasised to staff.

It was noted that Y13 would commence their mock examinations the following week and therefore the next CAP 5 data set would be a particularly significant one as it would report on these formal assessments. Improvements on CAP 4 data was anticipated.

**Q** – How confident were leaders with the standardisation of approach across departments to internal CAP assessments?

**A** – Good level of confidence as Heads of Department were aware of standard approach and moderation was in place in each subject area. Also, Curriculum Leaders (who had oversight of all subjects within their curriculum area) ensured that consistent standards were in place. Running alongside this was the messaging to all staff on the holistic nature of the CAP assessments.

Discussion ensued on the larger student cohorts across Y12 and Y13 and the impact on class sizes. No link was reported between CAP 4 data and larger class sizes.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for her report.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Level 3 Progress Report be received and noted.**

**ACTION – Review Autumn Term meeting date for 2025-26 to ensure CAP 1 data will be available.**

### 3.2 **Foundation Learning Progress Report** (*previously circulated*)

The Chair referred Committee members to the Foundation Learning student progress report and invited comments and questions.

**Q** – How was the CAP process applied to Foundation Learning?

**A** – Alignment with CAPs 1, 2 and 3 as Foundation Learning students followed a one-year programme. CAP 1 and CAP 2 progress data would be available at the next Committee meeting.

An overview was provided of the two available pathways for Foundation Learning students: BTEC assessment and adult skills development. Discussion ensued on the need for challenging work-related learning opportunities for Foundation Learning students and the Assistant Principal (Student Development & Support) provided a progress update on the post-Ofsted inspection action plan. As part of

this, it was reported that a full curriculum review had taken place and an update on the potential impact of this would be provided at the next full Governing Body meeting.

Further discussion ensued on the attendance and retention data reported for Foundation Learning students and the interventions put in place to further improve student engagement.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal and Vice Principal for their report and noted that CAP 1 and CAP 2 data – alongside data on work-related learning opportunities – would be reviewed at the next Committee meeting.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Foundation Learning Progress Report be received and noted.**

*Lauren Boswell left the meeting at this point.*

**3.4 Interventions to Raise Achievement (previously circulated)**

The Vice Principal confirmed that following public examination results, all departments had conducted September reviews of performance, following which one subject – Religion, Ethics & Philosophy (REP) – had been identified for formal subject review.

The Vice Principal referred members to the quality improvement actions set out in her report and provided a further update on recent actions. A detailed intervention plan had been implemented alongside a significant programme of moderated essay-based work. Internal and external collaboration was also taking place to facilitate the sharing of best practice. Further progress updates would be reported at future Committee meetings.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for her report and took the opportunity to acknowledge the improved 2025 results in all subjects that had been identified for formal subject review during the previous year. The efforts of all staff involved in securing these improvements was noted.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Interventions to Raise Achievement report be received and noted.**

**4. SKILLS AND CAREERS**

**4.1 Student Destinations Annual Report (previously circulated)**

The Chair referred members to this report and acknowledged the excellent destinations data. Key highlights from the report included:

- 98.4% of Level 3 destinations known
- 85.6% progression to higher education destinations
- 2.2% progression to apprenticeships
- 5.5% progression directly to employment
- 94.7% progression of Foundation Learning students into education, employment or training
- Talented athletes' destinations
- Foundation Learning student destinations
- Sixth Sense A Level destinations value-added analysis – 16% above national benchmark for sixth form colleges in terms of students' progression to university,

13% above national benchmark for progression to a Sutton 30 institution. This was particularly positive performance given the deprivation indices of student postcodes.

Committee members' comments and questions were invited.

**Q** – Significant increase in students progressing to north-west universities which may be driven by increase in cost of living and economic factors. Any concerns around this?

**A** – Economic necessity may be a factor in the increase in north-west university destinations, especially given the 6% increase in disadvantaged students compared to last year. Students were still able to access prestigious universities in Liverpool and Manchester without necessarily leaving home. However, the College worked with individual students to help them achieve their aspirations, wherever these lay, through the provision of high-quality impartial careers information and advice. For example, numerous students had moved overseas for sports scholarships and others had progressed to the University of the Arts London.

**Q** – In terms of the NEET percentage figure, how many actual students did this represent and how did this figure break down?

**A** – Actual student numbers would be confirmed following the meeting.

A point of clarification was raised with regard to students progressing to employment and the extent to which it was known if these were full-time or part-time roles and, as such, whether they represented the student's chosen career route. It was confirmed that the College did have drill down data on the nature of student employment destinations and discussion ensued on whether any additional reporting would add greater context to the Committee's future consideration.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal (Vocational & Super Curriculum) and all staff across the College involved in supporting students to these excellent destinations.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Student Destinations Annual Report be received and noted.**

**ACTION – Share NEET drill down data**

**4.2 Careers and Work Experience Annual Report (previously circulated)**

The Chair referred members to the report and invited the Skills & Careers Link Governor to comment on any areas of particular interest. The link governor provided a report back on an LCR Ignite networking session that he had attended; he commended the participating students for their maturity and confidence.

Reference was made to the updated Gatsby Benchmarks and associated statutory guidance. Discussion ensued on benchmark 8 and the College's strategy to upskill Personal Achievement Tutors (PATs) to achieve the Level 6 careers guidance qualification. It was noted that the Careers Manager and Work Experience Co-ordinator already had the Level 6 qualification but the aim was to roll this out across all PATs.

The Chair cross-referenced the positive student survey data on careers information, guidance and advice, and thanked the staff for their work throughout the year.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Careers and Work Experience Annual Report be received and noted.**

**4.3 Student Enrichment Programme Annual Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the Student Enrichment Programme Annual Report for 2024-25 and noted the wider range of enrichment opportunities and positive sustained student participation data.

Discussion ensued on the potential growth of high-quality, funded opportunities provided by employers, such as the Innovus LCR Ignite programme, as these had a meaningful impact on students. Other notable growth areas included girls' sports teams.

Committee members commended the excellent breadth of academic and non-academic enrichment opportunities and trips on offer and the Staff Governor reported back on the excellent staff commitment to providing students with such a wide range of opportunities.

The Chair extended the Committee's thanks to all staff involved in delivering these enrichment opportunities to students.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Student Enrichment Annual Report be received and noted.**

**5. STAFF AND STAKEHOLDER ANNUAL REPORTS**

**5.1 Staff Performance Management Annual Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the Staff Performance Management Annual Report. The Assistant Principal (Quality of Teaching, Learning & Staffing) provided a brief overview of the performance management process and invited any comments or questions.

**Q** – How was assurance gained over the quality of staff objectives?

**A** – Random selection of objectives reviewed by Curriculum Leaders, Assistant Principal and HR Manager to ensure consistent and robust approach. All targets were linked to College priorities.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Staff Performance Management Annual Report be received and noted.**

**5.2 Staff Professional Development Annual Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the Staff Professional Development Annual Report and invited any comments or questions.

**Q** – £10k positive variance in the allocated budget last year; any background to why full budget allocation not utilised?

**A** – Increase in lower-cost (or free) online learning and development opportunities, especially through central platforms such as TES Learn, National College etc. Cost implications of Level 6 careers qualification likely to lead to full budget utilisation this year.

**Q** – Opportunities for middle-leader development?

**A** – NPQ courses as well as a number of bespoke training opportunities. College involved in SFCA Middle Leadership Programme in previous year.

Discussion ensued on internal CPD ‘carousel’ offer this year which had replaced the previous bitesize programme. The Assistant Principal (Quality of Teaching, Learning & Staffing) provided further background on the rationale behind this transition.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Principal for his report.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Staff Professional Development Annual Report be received and noted.**

**5.3 Complaints Annual Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair referred members to the Complaints Annual Report which provided an anonymised overview of all formal complaints submitted between September 2024 and August 2025. It was noted that 13 complaints related to the administration of an A Level English Literature exam. The Principal reported that the error had arisen due to miscommunication; a new checking system had been put into place to avoid this situation in future and a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) would be present at the start of every external exam. It was noted that a special consideration request had been accepted by the exam board and all students had achieved expected grades or above.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Complaints Annual Report be received and noted.**

**6. STUDENT COUNCIL**

**6.1 Annual Review of Student Council Constitution** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair advised that the Student Council Constitution was due for annual review and referred members to the paper circulated. The Student Council had reviewed the constitution with the support of the Student Council Tutor and confirmed that no amendments were proposed.

As a result, members confirmed the existing Student Council Constitution and recommended it for approval by the full Governing Body.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Student Council Constitution be recommended for approval by the Governing Body**

**ACTION – FGB agenda item**

**7. POLICIES**

**7.1 Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair advised that the Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy was due for biennial review and referred members to the paper circulated. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had reviewed the policy with the input of the College’s solicitors, and no amendments were proposed.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy be approved.**

**7.2 Stress Prevention and Management Policy (previously circulated)**

The Chair advised that the Stress Prevention and Management Policy was due for biennial review and referred members to the paper circulated. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had reviewed the policy with the input of the College's solicitors, and no amendments were proposed.

**Resolved:**

- **That the Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy be approved.**

**8. COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS**

**8.1 Review of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2024-25 and approval of KPIs for 2025-26 (previously circulated)**

The Committee was required to review its own performance annually and the Clerk presented an analysis of performance against agreed KPIs from the previous academic year. It was noted that all but one KPI had been fully achieved. Full achievement of KPI 1 had been adversely impacted by poor attendance rate; membership changes for the current year were expected to address this issue, but attendance would remain under review.

The Clerk referred members to the draft KPIs for the year ahead; no amendments were proposed. Discussion ensued on whether it remained appropriate for exam results to be presented directly to the full Governing Body in Autumn Term or whether an additional Committee meeting was required to facilitate detailed discussion. It was agreed that the Chair and Clerk would review the proposed meeting cycle for 2026-27 to determine the best option.

**Resolved:**

- **That the analysis report on KPIs for 2024-25 be received and approved.**
- **That the KPIs for 2025-26 be approved.**

**ACTION – Review Q&S meeting cycle 2026-27**

**8.3 Review of Committee Skills Analysis and Training Plan (previously circulated)**

The Clerk presented an anonymised analysis of the 2025 skills audit responses for Quality & Standards Committee members. It was noted that all areas had scored three or above, therefore no significant skills gaps were evident on the Committee.

The Clerk reminded members of the regular training and development opportunities available via the Sixth Form College Association (SFCA) governance webinar programme and the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) Governance Development Programme. In addition, she invited any member to contact her should they identify the need for additional Committee training or personal development to support their governance role.

Members agreed that sessions on the following areas would be useful:

- impact of Level 3 qualification reform
- new Ofsted inspection framework
- SFCA sector update.

**Resolved:**

- That the Committee skills audit 2025 be received and noted.

**ACTION – Arrange training/briefing sessions for governors**

**9. OTHER MATTERS**

**9.1 Governor training**

No training was reported.

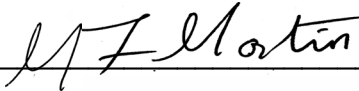
**9.2 Urgent business**

None

**9.3 Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 10 March 2026 at 5pm

The Chair thanked those members present for their attendance and contribution. There being no further business to address, the Chair closed the informal meeting at 7pm

Signed by the Chair \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

On this day \_\_\_\_\_ 10 March 2026 \_\_\_\_\_