Minutes of the Quality of Education and Skills (QES) Committee on Wednesday 21 May 2025 at Truro College

Members: S Sanderson (Chair), K Ashworth, L Batchelor, R Bray, L Chessman, O Marshall-Whitley, T Merrit, T Mtetwa, D Skinnard, M Tucker (Principal), F Wall and Chris Wathern

Also Present: L Briscoe (Director of Student Experience), A Bull (Director of Curriculum Development), J Cashmore (Director of Operations), L Maggs (Director of Operations, Penwith College), H McKinstry (Director of Business Partnerships & Apprenticeships), V Pearson (Director of Teaching and Learning), W Randle (Head of Governance) and R Townsend (Chair of Corporation)

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
1	**Apologies, introductions and declarations of interest** Apologies were received and accepted from Nicholas Basher. There were no further declarations of interest to those contained on the register.	
2	**Minutes of the previous meeting** The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2025 were approved as an accurate record.	
3	**Matters Arising** The Committee were satisfied with the updates provided in the matters arising report.	
4	**Progress against Strategic Objectives** The Committee received the papers updating on progress made against objectives 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 of the Strategic Plan, and the associated risks. Following a Governor request, an update on student transport was provided. The College has secured a new contract for 19 routes on a college bus pass, students not on these routes will use the public bus service. A discussion took place on the risk highlighted in the papers that student outcomes could be negatively impacted following the Ofsted grading and the restructure and efficiencies programme.	
5	**Employer Connect** The Director for Business Partnerships and Apprenticeships reported on the College's new Employer Connect Board. Membership comprises a mix of employers, mostly SMEs with some larger firms, representing engineering, construction, digital, hospitality and tourism, alongside colleagues from the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chamber of Commerce. The College's draft strategic plan will be shared with the group. It was noted that the Director for Business Partnerships and Apprenticeships is an advocate for the Chamber of Commerce and leading one of their working groups. A discussion took place on the College's position in delivering adult education, their share of the market (6%) and the longer term focuses.	

6	**Draft Accountability Agreement** The Committee received the draft Accountability Statement, alongside a paper outlining Board's statutory duty (introduced in 2022) to ensure the curriculum meets the local skills needed. Updates to the Accountability Statement include mapping to key strategic frameworks such as the Industrial Strategy, Good Growth Plan and Get Britain Working, showing how the College contributes to both local and national priorities. Future iterations will align with the revised Curriculum Planning Cycle. In response to governor questions, a discussion took place on how early stage provision translates into the longer term core curriculum, how data tracks these developments and the new 18 month curriculum planning cycle which will support a more proactive approach. A discussion took place on the need to improve consistency and include greater emphasis on soft skills development delivered across all student programmes, in future statements. It was understood that future changes could also be needed should the LSIP priorities change. Alongside good progress made within A Levels around working with employers and soft skills development, the College reflected on additional recent achievements: - 3rd FE college and in top 10 of Independent Training Providers (ITP); a potential area for growth without impacting on quality. - Apprenticeship Provider of the year. - Following the recent Ofsted inspection, the College was confirmed as making a strong contribution to meeting skills needs. The Committee were reminded of their enhanced role in skills oversight following recent governance changes. It was agreed that the Director of Business Partnerships and Apprenticeships and Head of Governance will consider how to fulfil the duty to review required in 2026.	HM WR/ HM
7	**Quality Improvement Plan review to include Student Data Update on** ▪ **Retention** ▪ **Attendance** ▪ **Recruitment and enrolment projections 2025/26** The Committee received the paper. A discussion took place on recruitment and the following points were noted: Analysis of leavers prior to the 42 days, will result in late applicants still going through an interview and induction process and the College are reintroducing a refocussed PPD offer to support students at risk of being NEET. PPD will support students in achieving some qualifications, for example first aid, maths and English and provide opportunities for work experience and tutor support, with a view to enrolling onto their next course/ apprenticeship. Additionally, the College are part of the Thrive pilot which aims to support at risk students from three schools to identify the barriers preventing their access to education. Regarding attendance, significant work has been undertaken to support data analysis and the changes to enrichment; this will impact on being able to benchmark to against previous years' data. The College continue to focus on supporting students on lower levels, from disadvantaged groups or impacted by transport.	
8 8.1 8.2 8.3	**SEND/ High Needs/ Inclusive practice** **Progress against external recommendations and next steps** The Committee received the paper. **High Needs Task and finish group** Included under agenda item 9.1. **Governors on the Ground** The Committee received the GOTG reports completed on visits undertaken this term.	

9 **9.1 &2**	**HE** **HE strategy & HE task and finish group** The College has collaborated with the HE task & finish group to develop a five-year strategy, as outlined in the paper. After conducting research and discussions, the College has identified what constitutes a high-quality graduate job to meet skills needs and are keen to ensure the HE provision offers inclusive and flexible courses. The College plan to apply for TEF Gold status when applicable, having previously held Silver following an application for Silver status; the only risk identified in achieving Gold status is related to research, with the active research already being undertaken across the College the risk is minimal. The next steps will be enacted following Board approval of the strategy with ongoing monitoring by the HE Task & Finish group.	
9.3	**Update on OfS Conditions of Registration and Risk Register** The Committee received the paper noting an update on the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration will also be shared with the Audit and Risk Assurance (ARA) Committee. Since the paper, the Access and Participation Plan (APP) has been approved to include the increase in tuition fees, in line with sector practice, and there are no concerns.	
10 **10.1**	**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** **EDI Policy** The Committee reviewed the EDI policy and recommended to Board its approval.	SS
10.2	**EDI Annual Report** The Committee thanked the Director of Student Experience for the report and noted the quality of the report. Following the Supreme Court judgement, the Director of Student Experience reported that whilst the College await DfE guidance on next steps, they have planned a review of all toilet and changing facilities with some changes planned for Lynher on the Truro campus to achieve inclusive buildings for all.	
10.3	**EDI Task and Finish Group** The Committee Chair reported that the EDI task and finish have not met as often they would like. A Governor provided an update on their attendance at the EDI Fair as part of Governors on the Ground, noting good student attendance and engagement and discussions held on stallholders for future fairs.	
11 **11.1**	**Safeguarding/ Prevent** **Safeguarding and Welfare Annual Report** The Committee received the annual report. It was reported that the College are considering additional cyber security and safeguarding measures to enhance student safety when using the Microsoft Teams chat facility. Following questions from Governors, it was understood that key messages around use of personal phones on College Wi-Fi are shared with students when they join the College and are also embedded within the tutorial programme.	
11.2	**Safeguarding peer review update** It was reported that the College meet termly as part of a peer review group with Cornwall College and Callywith College. This group have developed safeguarding promotional materials and have collectively challenged the county's safeguarding board. A similar approach for careers is being planning. Now taking this group approach forward for careers.	
11.3	**Governors on the Ground** The Committee received the latest report from the Safeguarding Lead Governor and an update was provided on a recent visit to undertake a Single Central Record check; the risk associated with not having a HR manager in place was noted.	

12	**Governors on the Ground - Student council** The Chair of the Corporation recently met with both the Truro and Penwith Student Councils. Discussions had centred on the efficiency exercise, transport issues and assurance on whether students feel safe on site. It was agreed that at a message from the College to students on the efficiencies would be shared in the next half term.	MT
	Staff and Student Governors left the meeting	
13	**Confidential agenda items** Detail contained in the confidential minutes.	
14	**AOB** None	
15	**Dates of Future Meetings** Tues 7 October 2025 Tues 18 November 2025 Tues 10 February 2026 Tues 19 May 2026	