

Minutes of the Quality of Education and Skills (QES) Committee on Monday 24 November 2025 at Truro College

Members: S Sanderson (Chair), L Batchelor, R Bray, L Chessman, O Marshall-Whitley, M Tucker (Principal) and F Wall.

Also Present: L Briscoe (Director of Student Experience), A Bull (Director of People, Culture and Curriculum), L Maggs (Director of Quality), H McKinstry (Director of Business Partnerships & Skills), V Pearson (Director of Learning, Assessment, Support), W Randle (Head of Governance) and R Townsend (Chair of Corporation)

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
	A presentation was delivered by Emma Mills, Head of Teaching & Learning Development on the partnership with Education Endowment Fund (EEF) and the College's new countywide post 16 disadvantage network.	
1	Apologies, introductions and declarations of interest Apologies were received and accepted from, Tamsin Merritt and Chris Wathern. There were no further declarations of interest to those contained on the register. Two student governors have been appointed for Truro and Penwith College and will be invited to the next Corporation meeting.	
2	Minutes of the previous meeting The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2025 were approved as an accurate record.	
3	Matters Arising The Committee reviewed the matters arising report. Action holders were asked to consider target dates, which would be reviewed by the Head of Governance (HOG) and the Chair; all actions should be completed by the next meeting unless a specific date is given.	SS/ WR
4	Any new risks linked to the Committee The Committee received the paper noting that there were no additional risks to those shared at the October meeting.	
5	Data update ▪ Enrolments ▪ Apprenticeships ▪ Adults Enrolments It was noted that the current enrolment data had been reviewed at the recent Governors Conference (14/11). Apprenticeships The College continues to excel in apprenticeship achievement rates, performing higher than the current national average of 72%, with validated data available in March 2026; every standard remains above the national averages.	

	Adults The Director of Business Partnerships & Skills shared the following points: - There are 3,545 learners across all provisions, from Level 1 to Level 4. The overall achievement rate is 75.8%, compared to the national average of 71.3%. The College aims to improve this rate. - The retention rate is 91.4%, which is above the national average; there is a need to improve outcomes for entry-level and Level 1 learners. - The College plan to review its data recording practices. Governors discussed how the College are undertaking data deep dives to monitor quality, and noted the Employer Connect Roadshow is going well and proving effective for building and strengthening partnerships with employers in order to offer quality employment opportunities and develop suitably skilled students.	
6	SEND/High Needs Strategy The Committee received the paper which outlined the options explored, and updates on actions taken, since the Governors' Conference on 14/11/25. Further update in the confidential minutes.	
7 7.1& 7.3	FE Self-Assessment Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2024/25 SAR Action Plan 2025/26 The Committee reviewed the SAR and action plan; individual Governors had been assigned areas on which to undertake a deep dive and provided their feedback at the meeting. The following points were noted and discussed: - Targets in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) are not performance based. More specific data, including timelines, deadlines, and KPIs would be beneficial in supporting monitoring of progress. - Where there are specific weaknesses, ie English GCSE at Penwith College, these should be clearly acknowledged in the SAR, along with actions being taken to address them. - Faculty SARs will be shared on Convene for Governors to review. 'Meeting skills needs' remains 'strong' as highlighted by Ofsted. - Changes in the skills review and framework, including SEND and equity for SEND skills development, could be emphasised further in the SAR and QIP, to include the College's work experience and enrichment offer. - The QIP should reflect the College's ability to be agile to change, such as V Levels, and should include greater detail on the transformational opportunities presented through Employer Connect and apprenticeships. - Whilst English and maths results are not at the desired level, they remain strong compared to benchmarks. - Include additional references to inclusion practices and their outcomes, i.e. Penwith campus results and student progress, within the SAR. - The College are exploring further use of the CPOMs system to improve staff safeguarding reporting with the aim to achieve good data management, consistency, and removal of duplication and personal opinion. - Retention rate is at 91%; the financial impact of improvements was recognised, with a target of 94% for 2025/26. - Ongoing issues with two-year retention, especially at A level, may be addressed by curriculum reforms and increased Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG); recent impact will be reviewed by the College. - Less movement of students between programmes suggests improvements from IAG. - Increased accountability and engagement for the Heads of Faculties (HoFs) roles in the SAR and QIP processes has been effective. HoFs are clear on expectations and have been trained accordingly. Training will remain ongoing during this cultural shift. - The cascade of information, communication, and accountability is evident in the SAR, especially regarding SEND, retention, and recruitment. - The personal development offer represents excellent value added and achieves transformational outcomes for students. - Future QIPs will include a section on staff personal development in line with the new	LM LM HM VP HM LM

	framework. ▪ Good progress has already been made against actions linked to inclusion. ▪ The College have noticed a small reduction in mental health issues and note the impact of the Young People Cornwall who are currently undertaking a review of their services. ▪ The College received highly commended for an AoC Beacon Award. ▪ Staff and student feedback had been positive. ▪ The High Needs and inclusion section accurately reflects recent discussions at Board level. ▪ The behaviours and attitudes section is a positive read. In summary, Governors were pleased to see more data-driven reporting, less narrative and a good use of bullet points. A short summary of good and areas for improvement would be beneficial. Governors welcomed the use of visuals to support data analysis. Governors reflected on the variances between the SAR gradings and the Ofsted gradings and agreed to recommend to Board approval of the College SAR gradings.	SS
7.2	Ofsted framework changes The Committee received the paper which provides an update and expected impact of the Ofsted reforms. Pilot inspections have been completed with the outcomes from the pilot still expected. Key areas of understanding for Governors include: ▪ The 5 point scale ▪ Context of College and Cornwall ▪ Strengths and Areas for Improvement ▪ Inclusion policy and practice ▪ Cross college SEND achievement gap; the data, journey and inclusion piece. In response to a Governor's question, the College's timeline for inspection is unknown.	
8	HE Self-Assessment Self-Assessment Report 2024/25 The Committee received the paper and invited the Associate Director – University Centre to join the meeting and present the report highlights, as detailed below: ▪ Whilst recruitment has improved overall, supported primarily by Nursing and Allied Health, growth has not been in line with expectations. ▪ Relationships with external providers remain good with recent commitment with Greenwich for a longer term working relationship. ▪ The College remains above national averages in terms of student satisfaction, though note the need to improve student uptake of the National Student Survey. ▪ The QIP includes the implementation of a Quality Cycle for HE to support staff CPD. ▪ The College plans to improve employer interactions and is developing systems to support both learners and employers with micro credentials and a kitemarking system. A discussion took place on recruitment challenges, to include internal recruitment, potential blockers and perception of blockers, and the low level improvements in this area. The College was pleased that, despite cutting some courses, they are still reporting small growth and expect to see this increase due to improved links with Heads of Faculties, development of the Hubs and building external relationships. A discussion took place on the course changes 2026/27 and 2027/28 and scope for further expansion in other allied health areas and the balance between niche and competitive provision. The Committee agreed to recommend to Board the approval of the SAR gradings and action plan.	SS
9	HE Strategy Action Plan – KPIs and progress and Task & Finish group update The action plan had been considered as part of agenda item 8. The Committee revisited the HE strategy. The Committee reflected on the public perception of FDAP awarding powers, recognising the College's reasons for not applying at present.	

	The HE Strategy task and finish group met to review progress and noted the College plans to build HE related employer relationships and links. Governors reflected on their attendance at the HE graduation; a fabulous event.	
10	Annual Mental Health report The Committee received the report and Governors praised the format. The Director of Student Experience updated that the number of mental health first aiders has reduced due to the recent restructure and the College are exploring ways to expand this provision to ensure students receive the necessary mental health support. The report will be shared with Board.	
11 11.1	EDI Annual Report The Committee received the report and were pleased with the outcomes achieved by the College. The report will be shared with Board.	
11.2	EDI task and finish group This group has proved useful and will meet again in the new year.	
12 12.1	Governance Governors on the Ground The Committee received the report. The College thanked the Safeguarding Lead Governor for undertaking the visit.	
12.2	Draft Cycle of Business The Committee approved the Cycle of Business. It was noted that Corporation is still trialling the new structure and whilst recognising the increased responsibilities of the Committee, appreciate the inclusion of the oversight of 'skills' within QES.	
13	Annual Report on HE Academic Appeals for 2024/25 The Committee noted there were no appeals.	
14	Annual Report on Complaints and Compliments for 2024/25 The Committee received the complaints and compliments report. The Principal thanked Lisa Jones for the preparation of the report. The College is reviewing the cross college complaints process to improve categorisation and reporting systems to ensure improved efficient handling of complaints. A Governor suggested including a column for 'resolved' complaints to track the resolution status more clearly.	MT
15	Annual Report on Student Suspensions and Exclusions for 2024/25 The Committee received the annual report and the Director of Learning, Assessment, Support highlighted that the College plan to explore the use of CPoms to record student behaviour, aiming for improved tracking and data analysis. There has been a reduction in student disciplinaries attributed to the proactive work of the Youth Intervention Officers and safeguarding team. The Committee discussed the use of body cameras by the Youth Intervention Officers, noting that these offer protections for both students and the officers, as well as the evidence base for taking action. The Committee was pleased to hear progress is being made to improve student safety near the Costcutter shop vicinity.	

	Governors praised the safeguarding teams.	
16 16.1	Any other business EEF partnership and TPC's new Cornwall post 16 disadvantage network Completed at the beginning of the meeting.	
17	Dates of Future Meetings Tues 10 February 2026 Tues 19 May 2026	