

## CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

### CONFIRMED MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2026 AT 4:00PM CITY COLLEGE NORWICH, THETFORD BOARDROOM

#### Present:

Philip Pearce	PP	Governor (Chair of Meeting)
Jerry White	JW	Principal and Governor
Lucy Sydney	LSy	Governor ( <i>remote, via MS Teams</i> )
Phillip Belden	PB	Governor ( <i>from 4.03pm</i> )
Laura Stewart	LS	Staff Governor
Lacey Ross	LR	Student Governor, SU President ( <i>remote, via MS Teams until 7:06pm</i> )
Freddie Simpson	FS	Student Governor ( <i>remote, via MS Teams until 4:53pm</i> )

#### Attendees:

Ed Rose	ER	Executive Director for Business Development, Apprenticeships and Adult
Helen Richardson-Hulme	HRH	Vice Principal Safeguarding, Inclusion and Student Services
Jodie Mitchell	JM	Director of Governance and Legal
Marcus Bailey	MB	Governor and Chair of the Corporation
Seb Gasse	SG	Chief Learning Officer
Claire Harber	CH	Governance and Legal Officer

#### Apologies:

Jock Downie	JD	Chair of Committee
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#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and noted as above.

#### 2. Declaration of Conflicts

No declarations were made

#### 3. UNCONFIRMED Minutes of the Meeting Held on 20 January 2026

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2026 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

#### 4. UNCONFIRMED Confidential Minutes of the Meeting Held on 20 January 2026

The unconfirmed confidential minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2026 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

*PB joined the meeting at 4:03pm.*

The Committee welcomed PB and introductions were made.

#### 5. Matters Arising

C&Q 2 Action 13: Engage with ER to explore ways in which Governors can support the College in strengthening stakeholder and employer engagement (JW). *The Employer Engagement Strategy was discussed at Strategy Day in January. The strategy will be presented to the Business Committee in May.* ACTION ONGOING.

C&Q 3 Action 1: Ensure that the impact of industrial action is included on the risk register (JW). *Impact of industrial action is included within strategic risk 6 - employee relations.* ACTION COMPLETE.

C&Q 3 Action 2: ACTION COMPLETE

C&Q 3 Action 3: FS to liaise with course leader regarding ways HE students can interact with the Student Voice Strategic Governor Group (FS). *Dialogue with course leader has begun. Further discussion will take place at the next Student Voice Governor Group meeting.* ACTION ONGOING (Due: March 2026).

C&Q 3 Action 4: Monitor situation in relation to additional funding for residential bursaries (JW). *A claim for the overspend will be submitted at the end of the academic year and it is expected that the claim will be accepted.* ACTION COMPLETE

C&Q 3 Action 5: Draft wording for the Curriculum Strategy to reflect that growth will only go ahead if the business case shows that growth in these areas will positively contribute to the financial sustainability of the College and circulate to C&Q Committee members to allow changes to be made ahead of the February Board meeting (JW/SG). ACTION COMPLETE.

C&Q 3 Action 6: Escalate the issue of delays in certification with the awarding body/ies in question as far as possible (SG). *SG confirmed that the action has been completed. It was agreed that an update on delays in certification would be included in the next Quality, Curriculum and TLA Report to the Committee.* ACTION COMPLETE

**ACTION 1: Include an update on delays in certification within the next Quality Report to C&Q (SG).**

## 6. Risk Register Review

The Risk Register Review was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- The Risk Register is now held on a spreadsheet and has been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee.
- Whilst the Audit and Risk Committee were content with the new register format, it was noted that risk appetite and tolerance still need to be ascertained.
- There are eleven identified strategic risks of which three are related to the work of the Curriculum and Quality Committee and a further three are part related.
- There is particular concern surrounding staff sickness and the impact of absence on the quality of delivery and staff workload. Staff sickness is being closely monitored by the Business Committee.
- There are around sixty operational risks underlying the strategic risks and it is being arranged for these to be shared with Governors so they can highlight any additional potential risks.
- The Senior Management Team (SMT) will be holding termly risk meetings.

Governors commented positively to the level of detail in the new register format, particularly in relation to specific mitigations. SMT were reminded to include all actions taken with the purpose of addressing a particular risk.

The Committee asked how the College will be considering the Post-16 Level 3 and Below Pathways announcement in relation to risk. It was noted that time is required to absorb how the announcements might impact the college and curriculum planning and that any arising risks are likely to be at an operational rather than strategic level.

## 7. Strategic Target Monitoring

It was noted that two strategic targets relate to retention and will be addressed in the Quality, Curriculum and TLA Report (item 12). It was agreed that Strategic Target Monitoring will be removed from Curriculum and Quality Committee agendas for the remainder of the year and that updates will be included within the Quality, Curriculum and TLA Report.

**ACTION 2: Update Schedule of Business to remove Strategic Target Monitoring as a standing item for the remainder of the year and include instead under the Quality Update (CH).**

## 8. Accountability Agreement 2026/27

A verbal update was provided as follows:

- An annual public statement in relation to accountability, to include strategic targets, is a requirement of the College's funding agreements.
- The deadline for publication has been deferred this year to the end of July.

Due to the deadline change, it was agreed that the draft Accountability Agreement and Strategic Targets would be presented to the next Committee meeting for consideration and comment with a view to having the final draft ready for the June Committee to recommend to Board for approval.

### 8.1 Proposed Accountability Agreement Strategic Targets 2026/27

See item 8.

### 8.2 Local Needs Duty

The Local Needs Duty paper was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Committee were advised that Governors are required to confirm that the College has satisfied its statutory duty (under the Skills and Post-16 Education Act) by:

- Undertaking a comprehensive curriculum review during 2025/26
- Embedding sector intelligence, labour-market data, employer input, and national policy changes
- Ensuring the process has been scrutinised across academic and professional services teams

It was noted that local needs are considered to an extent as part of the annual curriculum planning process but to satisfy the statutory duty, a deep dive in relation to the Local Needs Duty must be carried out at least once every three years and a statement published. It was proposed that future Curriculum Strategies have a three-year cycle aligning with the requirement for a triennial local needs review.

The Committee asked whether the College collaborates with other providers to understand local need. It was confirmed that as part of the curriculum strategy review process and as part of intent meetings, offerings of other providers are considered to assess competition and withdrawals (suggesting lack of demand). The College also engages with partners through forums such as construction head and apprenticeship provider meetings. It was noted that partner collaboration is greater in some areas of the curriculum, for example in adult provision funding is limited and demand is broad, so it is important to avoid duplication. It was agreed that more evidence on collaborative work with other providers would be included in the report before presentation to Board so that the governing body can be satisfied that the College is collaborating with other providers to the extent required.

Subject to further assurance being in relation to partner collaboration being demonstrated in the report, the Committee determined to recommend the triennial review of the local needs duty to Board for approval.

Further, the Committee agreed that triennial Curriculum Strategies will be the mechanism for triennial local needs reviews.

#### 9. **Students' Union and Student Voice Update**

The Students' Union and Student Voice Update was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- A Sustainability Festival is planned for next week, with activities prepared for all sites.
- FS and LR have met to discuss how to improve HE involvement in sustainability.
- Voting for the Students' Union President 2026/27 election opens at the end of March.
- The Students' Union is working with another Student Governor to set up a Leo's Club.

*FS left the meeting at 4:53pm.*

#### 10. **Wellbeing and Inclusion Report**

The Wellbeing and Inclusion Report was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- Mitigating actions including additional security, hotspot monitoring and targeted live CCTV monitoring have been taken to address worsening behaviours on the Norwich site last half term.
- Behaviour has improved so far this half term and staff have fed back that the site feels safer.
- There is continued focus on welcome duty and ensuring all people on site are wearing ID badges. It was noted that the importance of challenging those not wearing ID badges on site is included in staff safeguarding training.
- The college is working closely with the police which is allowing the college to respond swiftly to emerging issues.
- There has been positive feedback from staff on the Student Engagement Policy which was refreshed last term to implement earlier engagement with parents and carers where issues are identified, but it is causing workload challenges.

The Committee were informed that there is a consultation in progress on the 2026 issue of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) which suggests there will be significant updates in areas such as safeguarding and gender identity, pregnant and parent students, AI and AI generated images, misogyny, fraud and financial exploitation and weapons carrying. The consultation also suggests that Governors will need to monitor and review the effectiveness of arrangements under KCSiE. It was agreed that there will be focus on this requirement at one of the upcoming Link Safeguarding meetings.

**ACTION 3: Liaise with Link Safeguarding Governor to ensure the upcoming governance-related updates to KCSiE are weaved into future governor reporting (HRH).**

Governors were reminded that an online safeguarding training session for Governors has been arranged for 19 March at 3:30pm.

The Committee asked whether the training compliance rates are cause for concern and were informed that additional training sessions have been scheduled which should boost compliance rates. It was agreed that an update would be brought to the next Committee.

**ACTION 4: Provide an update on safeguarding training compliance at next C&Q Committee (HRH).**

The Committee asked what evidence there is to support the sense that the Norwich site feels safer in recent weeks, and it was agreed that the Duty Principal log would be presented at the next meeting.

**ACTION 5: Bring Duty Principal log to next C&Q meeting to demonstrate change in the reports of behavioural issues (HRH).**

**11. Careers Education, Advice and Guidance**

The Careers Education, Advice and Guidance paper was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- There is currently no Link Governor for careers so instead a termly careers report is presented to this Committee.
- A peer review by East Coast College has taken place and the learning from the visit is set out within the paper.
- An annual matrix Continuous Improvement Check has recently been completed and no concerns were raised.
- The College is strengthening parent engagement in careers; blogs and parent newsletters are now in place, and the College website is being updated to make it more accessible for parents.

The Committee were taken through the RAG rating for each action and explanations were provided where required.

**ACTION 6: Investigate why RAG ratings on the action plan are not visible on the board portal and circulate fresh copy to members (CH).**

*The meeting took a break at 5:30pm and reconvened at 5:40pm.*

**12. CONFIDENTIAL - Curriculum Planning Framework for 2026/27**

The discussion was confidential and is recorded in the confidential minutes.

**13. Quality, Curriculum and TLA Report**

The Quality, Curriculum and TLA Report was circulated prior to the meeting as taken as read. The following points were highlighted:

- The achievement Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is currently red, mainly due to ALPS and progress tracking being behind schedule. Mitigating actions are in place which include course reviews.
- Retention is amber – although retention is showing improvement on last year, there is uncertainty as to whether the 4% target will be met.
- Inclusion is green.
- The functional skills QIP is red; further issues have been uncovered which will make meeting the 10% target challenging.
- Progression QIPs are amber.

It was noted that there are improvement boards in six areas but delay in improvement is being aggravated by staffing issues.

The Committee asked whether the FE Skills Inspection Toolkit (FESIT) will be presented to the Committee with an overview of how the College is addressing issues. It was agreed that it

would come to the Committee in the summer, after the Senior Academic Management Board has had opportunity to consider it in more depth.

**ACTION 8: Add FESIT to C&Q agenda in the summer term (JM/JW).**

**14. Apprenticeships Report**

The Apprenticeships Report was circulated prior to the meeting. The following points were highlighted:

- There have been recent changes to apprenticeships accountability measures which are outlined in the paper.
- One area that has affected the College is the change in the apprentices past planned end date metric to remove the period of grace previously in place. Feedback nationally suggests the change in methodology is affecting a number of larger providers.
- The apprentices past planned end date metric has changed to amber since the last report; this is being closely monitored. Areas with high numbers passed planned end date are mostly areas in which there have been staffing challenges, for example, engineering technicians and domestic heating.
- Achievement rates remain strong.

The Committee asked whether the economic downturn creates a risk that businesses cease to operate and are therefore unable to support apprentices. The Committee were informed that due to being in Norfolk, many of the employers the College works with are smaller businesses so the impact of any business closure will affect a smaller number of apprentices. Although the risk is small, the College are aware of the potential issue and monitor business updates via delivery managers.

The Committee asked what mitigating actions are planned to address the apprentices past planned end date metric and it was agreed that an action plan would be prepared for presentation to the next meeting. The Committee also expressed concern that some providers are allegedly artificially shortening dates to work around the issue and asked whether the College are doing this. The response from the senior team present was no; data integrity is important to the College and internal audits in relation to funding and management information systems are carried out to ensure that correct processes are being followed.

**ACTION 9: Prepare action plan to address apprentices past planned end date (ER).**

**15. SEND Report**

The SEND Report was circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read. The following points were highlighted:

- A change in JCQ guidelines on how exam access arrangements are assessed to assessment by individual programme has dramatically increased workload.
- All students due to sit exams in the summer who submitted their request by the deadline have been assessed and have appropriate arrangements in place. Work is underway to assess late submissions and chase those yet to submit a request.
- Appendix 1 to the report contains information on the SEND reform white paper for Governor information.

The Committee expressed concern over the significant number of exam access arrangements required (around 60% of all students sitting English and maths GCSE) and asked whether this is included as an operational risk. It was agreed that this would be checked.

**ACTION 10: Check that exam access arrangements is included on the operational risk register (JW).**

The Committee were reminded that there is no SEND Link Governor and were asked whether this is a role the Committee would like to consider putting in place. The Committee expressed that this should be a question for the governing body and that if an independent Governor is interested in taking on the role, it should be considered.

**ACTION 11: Ask eligible Governors for expressions of interest for the SEND Link Governor role (JM/MB).**

*LR left the meeting at 7:06pm.*

**16. 2025/26 Term 1 Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Report**

The 2025/26 Term 1 Compliments, Complaints and Appeals Report was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Committee were informed that there has been an increase in the number of complaints, mainly in relation to English and maths staffing and exam access arrangements where the College is aware of issues.

The Committee noted the report.

**17. Other Urgent Business**

**17.1 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM**

The discussion was confidential and is recorded in the confidential minutes.

**17.2 Internal Audits**

The Committee were asked to submit views on what internal audits should be considered for next year. It was agreed that the current matrix would be circulated to members and any suggestions should be sent to the Director of Governance and Legal by the end of April.

**ACTION 12: Send internal audit matrix to C&Q members (JM).**

**ACTION 13: C&Q members to send any suggestions for internal audits to JM by the end of April (C&Q members).**

**18. Meeting Review and Summary**

No matters were raised under this item.

**19. Date of Next Meeting**

The next Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on 28 April 2026 at 4:00pm.

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 7:20pm.

Signed ..... Date .....  
(Chair of Meeting)