

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

CONFIRMED MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2026 AT 4:00PM CITY COLLEGE NORWICH, THETFORD BOARDROOM

Present:

Jock Downie	JD	Chair
Jerry White	JW	Principal
Lucy Sydney	LSy	Governor and Vice Chair of Committee
Philip Pearce	PP	Governor
Laura Stewart	LS	Staff Governor (<i>from 4:06pm</i>)
Lacey Ross	LR	Student Governor, SU President (<i>Remote, via Teams</i>)
Freddie Simpson	FS	Student Governor (<i>Remote via Teams, until 6:09pm</i>)

Attendees:

Ed Rose	ER	Executive Director (<i>from 5:14pm</i>)
Helen Richardson-Hulme	HRH	Vice Principal
Jodie Mitchell	JM	Director of Governance and Legal
Marcus Bailey	MB	Chair of the Corporation (<i>Remote, via Teams until 7:00pm</i>)
Seb Gasse	SG	Chief Learning Officer
Claire Harber	CH	Governance and Legal Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

2. Declarations of Conflicts

No declarations were made.

3. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13 November 2025

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2025 were agreed as a true record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair at the next available opportunity.

4. Matters Arising

C&Q 2 Action 1: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 2: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 3: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 4: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 5: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 6: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 7: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 8: ACTION COMPLETE

C&Q 2 Action 9: Present the implications to the College of the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper and Curriculum and Assessment Review in a way deemed appropriate by SMT (JW). *It was agreed that this would be addressed as part of the Governance Improvement Plan action to produce video resources for Governors.* ACTION CLOSED

C&Q 2 Action 10: ACTION COMPLETE
 C&Q 2 Action 11: ACTION COMPLETE

C&Q 2 Action 12: ACTION COMPLETE

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). *It was noted that the Employer Engagement Strategy is on the agenda for the upcoming Strategy Day.* ACTION ONGOING (Due: January 2026)

LS joined the meeting at 4:06pm.

C&Q 2 Action 14: ACTION COMPLETE

C&Q 2 Action 15: ACTION COMPLETE

C&Q 2 Action 16: Ensure that nursery risks are appropriately reflected within reputational risk on the risk register (JW). *It was noted that nursery risks will be built into the College's plan for risks.* ACTION CLOSED.

C&Q 2 Action 17: ACTION COMPLETE

5. Risk Register Review

The Risk Register Review was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Committee were informed that there has been no significant change in risk since the last meeting, but some actions and mitigations have been updated. It was noted that risks relating to staff shortages and emerging behavioural issues will be covered in the Quality and Wellbeing Updates.

Governors asked whether industrial action has been included within the risk register and were informed that this will be captured.

ACTION 1: Ensure that the impact of industrial action is included on the risk register (JW).

6. Strategic Target Monitoring

The Strategic Target Monitoring paper was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Committee were reminded that two targets are monitored by this Committee – retention in relation to 16–19-year-olds and retention in relation to adult learners. It was noted that retention will be covered in more depth in the Quality Update and that the full data dashboard will be presented to Board in February.

7. Students' Union and Student Voice Update

The Students' Union (SU) and Student Voice Update was circulated prior to the meeting.

The following points were highlighted:

- Students have been involved in a rebranding exercise for one of the coffee shops at Ipswich Road.
- Students have shown interest in the recent industrial action and have been voicing their opinion at the student parliament. Feedback from students is that although they understand the reasons for action, they disagree to the timing which has been disruptive to learning.
- The Paston Christmas Show was a success and well-attended by students.
- LR, along with another one of the Student Governors, attended a Student Governor summit last month where they had the opportunity to meet other Student Governors

from across the country and learn more about governance which was a worthwhile learning experience.

- The SU are working with the Chief Operation Officer and the sustainability working group to plan a sustainability festival. Consideration is being given to pushing the date back to allow the festival to coincide with 'Green Week'. It was suggested that online events be included to ensure HE students have opportunity to participate.
- The SU are moving forward with the Young Carers Group after increased interest and staff have stepped forward to help.

It was reported that the Student Voice Strategic Governor Group are discussing ways to interact with students. FS offered to liaise with his course leader to consider ways in which HE students can be involved.

ACTION 2: LR to liaise with FS regarding how to ensure HE students have opportunity to participate in sustainability festival events (LR/FS).

ACTION 3: FS to liaise with course leader regarding ways HE students can interact with the Student Voice Strategic Governor Group (FS).

7.1 Student Voice Strategic Governor Group Terms of Reference

The Student Voice Strategic Governor Group Terms of Reference was circulated prior to the meeting.

The Committee approved the Terms of Reference and appointed Philip Pearce as Chair of the group.

8. CONFIDENTIAL - Wellbeing and Inclusion Report

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

9. Residential Report

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

- There have been some reports of behavioural issues in residences, which have now been dealt with.
- There have been a positive number of applications for next year
- There has been an overspend on the residential bursary and the College intends to claim additional funding from the DfE.

The Committee asked whether the overspend is of concern given the financial situation at the College and were informed that the amounts are relatively small, the likelihood of the additional funding from the DfE being approved is high and that the allocation will be increased next year.

ACTION 4: Monitor the situation in relation to additional funding for residential bursaries (JW).

The meeting took a break at 5:06pm and reconvened at 5:14pm.

ER joined the meeting at 5:14pm.

10. Quality, Curriculum and TLA Report

The Quality, Curriculum and TLA Report, Score Card and Curriculum Strategy were circulated prior to the meeting.

The following points were highlighted:

- Retention rates are an improvement on this time last year, but the likelihood of meeting the 4% target is low.
- Attendance is a concern, particularly in maths and English.
- Improvement Boards have been implemented in six areas to accelerate improvement by preparing action plans or business cases for change; initial meetings have taken place. Attendees include the Head of Area, Head of Teaching and Learning and the Director of People.

There was a discussion around poor attendance. The Committee were informed that inconsistent staffing in English and maths may have contributed to poor attendance, as well as students suffering with mental health issues. The Student Engagement Policy is now in place to assist staff with processes where attendance is an issue. Concern was raised by the Committee around the correlation between non-attendance and lower achievement.

Curriculum Strategy

The Curriculum Strategy was presented to the Committee. The following points were highlighted:

- The strategy is based around three themes: change and innovation, curriculum growth and curriculum development.
- Key areas of growth have been identified as Agriculture and Food, Construction and Engineering, Health, and becoming a Centre of Excellence for Social Emotional and Mental Health needs.
- Business cases will be developed to ascertain whether the college will go ahead with growth in these areas.
- Continued focus is planned on higher technical qualifications. There has been some growth already, for example, in Level 4 Engineering.

The Committee were cautious to stress that any agreement to the strategy would be subject to growth and development plans being financially viable and the strategy linking effectively to other strategies. It was agreed that the wording in the development section would be amended 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. It was further agreed that draft wording would be circulated to the Committee by email for agreement.

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).

The Committee determined to recommend the Curriculum Strategy as a framework for prioritising curriculum to the Board for approval, with the caveat that any cases for investment would need to be made and approved where appropriate. The Committee requested that the cross-over with the Transformation Programme should be made clear for the Board.

The Committee responded positively to the Score Card. Feedback on cancelled lessons was noted and it was noted that the feedback includes some covered lessons.

Delay in certification from some awarding bodies was noted. The Committee requested that the issue be fully escalated.

ACTION 6: Escalate the issue of delays in certification with the awarding body/ies in question as far as possible (SG).

FS left the meeting at 6:09pm.

11. Apprenticeships Report

The Apprenticeships Report was circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee's attention was drawn to the following points:

- The College is performing well on the accountability measures.
- Where Passed Planned End Date is amber, this was due to contracts with End Point Assessment Organisations awaiting signature and is now resolved.
- The College is performing well against national averages on achievement rates and rates at the College are better than last year.
- A new CRM system is tracking apprenticeship recruitment and electronic onboarding is hoped to be in place by the autumn which will reduce time and audit risk.

The post-FE Commissioner lessons learnt and visit action plan was presented. The Committee were informed that the visit was a 'health check' visit requested by the College due to lower performance in relation to the sector average and that there were no surprises in the report. It was confirmed that updates to the action plan will be included in Apprenticeships Reports to the Committee.

The Committee noted the report.

12. HE Report

The HE Report was circulated prior to the meeting.

Curriculum developments, OfS updates and recruitment updates were highlighted to Governors.

The Committee noted the report.

13. CONFIDENTIAL – NTTC Report

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

14. Access and Participation Plan Evaluation

A verbal update was provided.

The Committee were informed that due to changes in requirements from the Office for Students, Governor approval is no longer required for an Access and Participation Plan. Instead, an annual report will be presented each summer.

15. CONFIDENTIAL – Other Urgent Business

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

MB left the meeting at 7:00pm.

16. Meeting Review and Summary

Governors commented that cover sheets could be used more effectively to direct Governors to what action they are being asked to take.

It was noted that a mop-up safeguarding training session is in the process of being planned and it was stressed that safeguarding training is mandatory for all Governors.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next Curriculum and Quality Committee Meeting is scheduled to take place on 10 March 2026 at 4:00pm.

All formal business having been concluded; the meeting closed at 7:04pm.

Signed Date
(Vice Chair of Committee)