

Preston College

Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting held on 19 June 2025 at 5.30pm, Preston College

Present:

Mrs Laura Mason Chair
Mr Simon Nixon Principal and Chief Executive
Mrs Helen Curtis
Ms Giulia D'Ambrosio
Miss Marya Momand
Mr Robert Marshall-Slater Remote (Zoom)

In attendance:

Mrs Marie Haworth Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support
Mr Mick Noblett Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning
Mrs Clare Rayner Director of Governance

1. Welcome and apologies

The Committee noted that all members were present.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and:

- congratulated Miss Marya Momand on winning the Community Impact Award at the Student Awards 2025;
- reported that Mrs Jen Walters had resigned from the Board at the end of May 2025.

The Committee recorded thanks to Mrs Walters for her contribution to the Quality and Standards Committee.

2. Declaration of interests

Mrs Helen Curtis noted that there were references to the University of Central Lancashire in the reports and if required she would leave the meeting for these discussions.

3. Minutes of the Meeting – 27 February 2025

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2025 as a correct record.

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2025 were agreed and signed as a correct record

4. Matters Arising

The Committee considered the Matters Arising report. The Chair noted progress on some actions since the last meeting. The Committee noted the Matters arising report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Matters arising report.

5. Performance against KPIs

Mr Mick Noblett, Vice Principal - Curriculum Delivery and Planning, referred members to the Performance Against KPIs report and the Positive Attendance Framework report at Appendix A. Mr Noblett and Mrs Marie Haworth, Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support, reported:

- that in response to feedback on management of attendance, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and College Management Team (CMT) had recently reviewed the Positive Attendance Framework, at Appendix A, with a view to balancing the College's 'carrot and stick' approaches before moving into in 2025/26;
- that there would be greater use of temporary and permanent exclusions and other interventions to manage attendance;
- on discussions with CMT about best how to allocate staff resources and discussion on the importance of interventions to encourage students with 75-80% attendance (average attendance) to improve as well as students with low attendance. Notwithstanding, a significant number of students achieved over 90% attendance. Members were supportive of diverting some staff resources to encouraging attendance of students with average attendance to improve;
- that the College would use the Department for Education's (DfE) framework for recording attendance;
- the proposed KPIs for 2025/26 and setting realistic targets, with a 2% increase for apprenticeship achievement which appeared low but was significantly above national benchmarks.

The Committee discussed the report with management, in response to queries from members, the Committee noted:

- that End Point Assessment (EPA) availability was improving but was beyond the College's control and impacted on achievement rates within academic years. Colleges continued to debate this matter with the DfE;
- that, if audited, the College's systems and processes in regard to attendance were likely to be sound. The attendance issue related to encouraging students with attendance issues to attend more regularly;

- that the College now received attendance data from schools for about 60% of students which was a significant improvement on previous years;
- on the possibility that there was some attendance fatigue with students as the topic had been discussed so much;
- that attendance was only one metric and should be considered within the context of other KPIs, particularly achievement;
- on the importance of a culture of celebration of students' achievements at events such as the Student Awards, staff shows and other activities throughout the year;
- on the importance of sharing key messages on attendance with students before they joined the College and during induction and ensuring that students understood the consequences of not attending from their first day at College.

Members commented that other colleges would covet the College's attendance results and, whilst attendance had remained under target during 2024/25, it was evident that College management had introduced a number of interventions and a good proportion of students were attending College.

Members congratulated management and staff on performance during 2024/25, and in particular highlighted that 93% retention and 70% achievement for apprenticeships were exceptional results.

During discussion members requested:

- a suggestion that "every timetable day" was added to the framework;
- that the two previous years retention information was provided alongside the current year to provide context.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Performance against KPIs report.

Action: To add the two previous years retention information alongside the current year to provide context.

6. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Update

Mrs Haworth presented the Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) Update. Mrs Haworth reported:

- that all teaching staff had been observed at learning walks, unless they were on maternity leave or other leave;

- on areas of strength and areas for further enhancement had been identified and in particular inconsistent support for Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Level 3 students in some sessions would be addressed.

The Chair welcomed the report which captured the areas for improvement and the development during the academic year. The Chair stated that the scoring system discussed at the previous meeting was unnecessary as the qualitative report on the strengths and areas for improvement, reports on professional discussion and staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provided a good overview.

The Committee discussed the report with management, in response to queries from members, the Committee noted:

- that the areas for further enhancement related specifically to Level 3 EHCP students. However, outcomes for this cohort at the College still exceeded the national achievement rate;
- outcomes from the Behaviour and Engagement Training session which had taken place in February and that Quality Practitioners (QPs) would take learnings forward into lessons;
- there had been lots of interventions during 2024/25 and overall student behaviour was improving and students appeared to be more settled compared to this time last year;
- that the positive impact of QPs was evident;
- that the College had received eight applications for Centre for Excellence and the outcomes would be shared with the committee in due course;
- following a suggestion from the staff governor, it was noted that guidance for staff on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools for education and development would be communicated to Schools. It was noted that AI was a key thread of the College's Digital Strategy and would feature in the next Digifest.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Report.

7. Quality Improvement Plan 2024/25

Mrs Haworth referred members to Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2024/25. Mrs Haworth reported that:

- some “red” areas and the College was reviewing its maths and English processes and investment in Virtual Learning Environment materials;
- the government requirement for 100 hours of maths and English would be introduced for 2025/26;
- apprenticeships performing well;
- the 5As had been imbedded into the College;
- reporting of richer details on students on ProMonitor and the necessity to move to a different system.

Members commented positively on the report which was clear and straight forward.

The Committee noted the QIP report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the QIP 2024/25.

8. Safeguarding and Support for Students

Mrs Haworth presented the Safeguarding and Support for Students report. Mrs Haworth reported:

- on support for looked after children;
- on mental health support for students;
- that the Office for Students (OfS) had introduced a new condition on harassment and sexual misconduct and compliance was required by 1 August 2025. The conditions would also need to be embedded in relating College policies;
- on the successful introduction of mental health first aiders and a wellbeing room;
- that recruitment for September 2025/26 was strong with 930 of the 16-18 applicants making a SEND declaration and 613 applicants have been offered a College place and this was expected to increase to 1000 by the end of the year;
- that additional resources would be required by September to meet the demand;
- that to date, 45 student applications were pending a High Needs/ EHCP consultation from Lancashire County Council;
- it had been necessary for the College to refuse 63 students a place as the College could not meet either their needs, sometimes this related to their course requirements and sometimes because the College could not meet their support needs, e.g. the College did not offer one to one teaching;

- that where the College could meet the needs of a high needs student it would accept the student;
- the draft Prevent risk assessment at Appendix A;

Mrs Curtis, Safeguarding and Prevent Link Governor, reported she had met with Mrs Haworth and Mrs Southworth before the meeting. She reported that she was very content with the report and the College's ongoing safeguarding and Prevent work and that management and staff were rightly proud of the wellbeing room which helped support students in crisis.

The Committee discussed with management the importance of making students employable by developing tenacity, courage and resilience. This could also help students avoid more serious mental health issues. Members referred to teaching students strategies for dealing with anxiety which could be helpful throughout their life. Members also referred to the recent governor lunch, where staff had discussed the importance of developing resources to help staff, particularly student managers, to advise and support students.

The Committee discussed the report with management, in response to queries from members, the Committee noted:

- the importance of recognising and congratulating students if they showed resilience;
- clarification that face to face Safeguarding and Prevent training for governors had been scheduled to take place during 2024/25. However, a date had not been set to date and the training would take place over the summer or in September;
- the College had moved online Safeguarding and Prevent training for new governors from MS Forms to Canvas which had delayed the issuing of the training to new governors appointed in 2025. The training had now been issued and governors had been asked to complete this training within three months.

The Committee noted the report needed the Prevent Risk Assessment at Appendix A.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Safeguarding and Support for Students report and the Prevent Risk Assessment at Appendix A.

9. Accountability Statement

Mr Noblett introduced the draft Accountability Statement 2024/25 which would demonstrate how the College delivered on its statutory Local Needs Duty. Members noted that external feedback was excellent.

The Committee noted progress against the Accountability Statement 2024/25 and agreed to recommend the draft Accountability Statement 2025/26 to the Board for approval.

Resolved: The Committee noted progress against the approved Accountability Statement 2024/25 and agreed to recommend to Board the approval of the Accountability Statement 2025/26.

10. Student Experience – Careers and Progression

Mr Noblett referred members to the Student Experience Careers and Progression report Mr Noblett reported:

- that the College had recently been re-assessed against the Matrix framework which measured the quality of the colleges Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and the College had been able to share some amazing feedback with the assessor who had been impressed by the College's work;
- on ongoing work to raise the profile of T Levels;
- that the report captured the ongoing work in the College.

Members discussed with management the achievement of the College in this area, the work on taster days, the work to raise the profile of T Levels and the opportunity for sector advisory groups to support the delivery of T Levels.

The Committee noted the Student Experience – Careers and Progression Report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the report.

11. Student Council and Student Voice Update

Mr Noblett referred members to the Student Council and Student Voice Update. Mr Noblett reported on:

- Student Council activities such as Culture Day and review of the College's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy;
- a summary of Student Voice feedback from the spring term;
- the You said we Did report at Appendix A;
- an end of year student survey had received over 700 responses and a summary would be shared with the Committee in 2025/26.

Miss Momand, Student governor 16-18 and Chair of the Student Council, reported that:

- attendance had improved at the Student Council and students were participating more in meetings;

- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students were now much better informed of course requirements as they progressed to Level 1 and 2 classes;
- Management confirmed that a transitional taster afternoon had been introduced following feedback from the student governor.

Miss Momand provided feedback that some students were unaware of who to speak to for careers advice. Management undertook to address this.

The Committee discussed the report with management, in response to queries from members, the Committee noted:

- that there were examples of innovative practice in Schools;
- efforts to contextualise maths and English, with some lessons taught in Schools;
- that a Timetable Officer role had been created to maximise room allocation efficiencies;
- that the College's Standing Orders allowed for the appointment of a: student governor 16-18, student governor FE and student governor HE;
- that the student governor 16-18 role was always contested, until recently the College had usually also appointed student governor FE each year. However, the student governor HE role had not generated any interest since its introduction;
- that the proposal to the Board was to have two 16-18 student governors and one 19+ student governor and that apprentices could apply for either constituency;
- that student governor opportunities were advertised on the College app, tutorials, at the Student Council and on screens around College;
- recent communication from DfE about the role of student governor and advice that colleges' Instrument and Articles should be changed to allow under 18s to vote on matters related to expenditure and contracts.

During discussion on ways to promote the student governor opportunities it was suggested that TicTok videos were created and the opportunity was given greater emphasis at induction.

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Student Council and Student Voice Report.

12. Partnership and Sub-contracting

Mr Noblett referred members to his report on Partnership and Sub-contracting.

The Committee noted that the College managed two main sub-contracts, with Lancashire Fire and Rescue (King's Trust) and Preston North End Community Trust (PNECET) supporting delivery of Adult Learning and 16-19 Study Programme provision.

In response to a query, it was noted that the King's Trust delivered the Lancashire Fire and Rescue contract which delivered excellent student outcomes.

The Committee noted the report and agreed to recommend to Board the proposed sub-contracting arrangements for 2025/26. The Committee noted that the Resources Committee considered the financial impact of the sub-contracting arrangements as part of its review of the draft budget 2025/26.

Resolved: The Committee noted the Partnership and Sub-contracting report and agreed to recommend to Board the proposed sub-contracting arrangements for 2025/26.

13. Higher Education Update

Mrs Haworth presented the Higher Education (HE) Update. She reported on:

- attendance was excellent at 97.53% (97.78%);
- academic integrity matters as seven cases of unauthorised use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) had been recorded;
- the refurbishment of the HE Centre had been completed;
- the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Ofsted Themed Monitoring Visit had been a positive experience and an inspection was expected in the spring term;
- strengths identified at the ITE Ofsted visit and areas for further development such as developing understanding of neurodiversity, ADHD, and Autism conditions.

Members commented positively on the feedback from Ofsted.

The Committee discussed the report with management. In response to queries from members, the Committee:

- noted that Turnitin was used to help identify potential use of AI writing tools in students' work;
- noted that changes in approach to assessment were likely to change as AI continued to develop;

- recognised that students still needed to learn to use AI as it was becoming a tool that was used in the workplace;
- noted that following comments from members, the report would be amended to record that attendance was excellent rather than good;

The Committee noted the report.

Resolved: The Committee noted the HE Update report.

Action: to amend reference to attendance in the report before it was considered by the Board.

14. Policy Review

Mrs Haworth and Mr Noblett outlined the proposed changes to the:

- FE Admissions Policy at Appendix A. Following a suggestion, it was agreed to amend reference from gender to sex in the policy to reflect the terminology used in the Equality Act and the Supreme Court judgment in relation to the meaning of sex in the Equality Act;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy at Appendix B;
- Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy at Appendix C;
- Access and Participation Statement at Appendix D;
- Student Protection Plan at Appendix E;
- Safeguarding, Prevent and SEND link governor role description at Appendix F;
- Curriculum and Skills Link Governor Protocols at Appendix G.

The Committee agreed to recommend the documents to the Board for approval.

Resolved: The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board for approval:

- **FE Admissions Policy – Appendix A;**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy – Appendix B;**
- **Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy – Appendix C;**
- **Access and Participation Statement – Appendix D;**
- **Student Protection Plan – Appendix E;**
- **Safeguarding, Prevent and SEND link governor role description – Appendix F;**
- **Curriculum and Skills Link Governor Protocols – Appendix G.**

Action: To amend reference from gender to sex in the policy to reflect the terminology used in the Equality Act.

15. Forward Work Programme

The Director of Governance referred members to the draft Quality and Standards Forward Work Programme for 2025/26 at Appendix A. The Director of Governance explained the rationale for the proposal to reduce from four meetings each year to three meetings per year. The Committee endorsed this approach.

The Committee welcomed the introduction of a Self Assessment Report (SAR) workshop before the October Board meeting.

The Committee approved the draft Quality and Standards Committee Forward Work Programme 2025/26.

Resolved: The Committee approved the draft Quality and Standards Committee Forward Work Programme 2025/26.

16. Items to draw to the attention of the Board

The Committee agreed to highlight to the Board:

- that student attendance remained below the College's KPIs target and continued to be a key challenge and ongoing priority for the College. The Committee discussed with management the College's evolving initiatives to improve attendance. The Committee reviewed the 'Positive Attendance Framework' which aimed to balance 'carrot and stick' approaches in 2025/26, whilst ensuring a greater consistency of practice across the College in managing poor student attendance;
- the excellent work of Mental Health First Aiders at the College and the introduction of a wellbeing room to support students with mental health concerns;
- that a College wellbeing day had been held.

17. Any other business

The Chair reported that:

- this would be Miss Momand's final meeting as student governor and recorded thanks to Miss Momand on behalf of the Committee. Miss Momand thanked the Committee;
- Mr Robert Marshall-Slater's term of office would end in September and therefore this could be Mr Marshall-Slater's last Quality and Standards Committee and recorded thanks to Mr Marshall-Slater on behalf of the Committee. Mr Marshall-Slater thanked the Committee.

18. Date of next meeting

The Committee noted that the date of the next meeting would be confirmed at the Board meeting on 3 July 2025.