

Meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee

Thursday 15th January 2026 at 4 pm

Seminar room 2

Minutes

Present: Andrew Lord (Chair), Mary Osmaston (Governor), Daniel Waterhouse (Governor), Sue Keenan (Governor).

In attendance: Richard Evans (Deputy Principal for Education and Standards) DPES, Tamara Breeze (Director of Governance and Compliance) DGC, Kelli Horner (Head of Quality) HoQ.

Sinead Kay and Gayle Salt (Directors of Curriculum), Hilary Pezet (Director of Student Experience & Transformation), Beth Lowery (Director of Inclusion).

157	Apologies for Absence: Kevin Boles, Jason Turton
158	Declaration of Interests None
159	Minutes from the Meeting 22nd November 2025 The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and approved.
160	Matters Arising and action plan No additional matters discussed beyond items on the agenda.
161	Revised Quality Improvement Plan The VPES presented the updated Quality Improvement plan that had been refined to meet the expectations of the FEC team and now reflected the whole of the Ofsted Framework rather than just the areas noted as requiring improvement in the last inspection. The committee welcomed the format and content as clear and purposeful. Ready to learn – Committee Deep Dive The Committee received a detailed report from Hilary Pezet providing an update on attendance and punctuality across the College for the current academic year. Members noted that attendance remains a strategic priority due to its strong link with learner outcomes, safeguarding, retention and progression, and that leaders continued to face increasingly complex challenges influencing patterns of engagement, including mental health, cost-of-living pressures, travel issues and family attitudes toward regular attendance. The Committee reviewed the current position, noting that year-to-date attendance stands at 88.2% for 16–18 learners, 89.3% for adults, and 90.5% for apprentices. While main programme attendance remained reasonably stable at 90%, the Committee expressed concern regarding the significantly lower levels in English (75%) and maths (74%), which remained well below sector averages and continue to represent a key risk to learner progress and future inspection outcomes. Members considered the range of interventions introduced since the last report, including strengthened policy expectations, increased SEPO chases, and more consistent use of disciplinary stages for persistent non-attendance. The Committee welcomed the increased focus on parental engagement through automated text notifications, improved use of MyKC for reporting absences and termly communications aimed at building a shared responsibility for attendance. Early signs of improved visibility and more accurate recording of absences were noted.

	<p>The Committee discussed the enhanced processes for early identification of concerns, including weekly sickness reports, daily checks for vulnerable learners and tighter escalation routes, while recognising the ongoing pressure on staff time to record actions consistently. Members also acknowledged the positive impact of timetable adaptations for learners with complex needs, although these measures had contributed to lower headline attendance figures.</p> <p>Specific attention was given to the slight decline in apprenticeship attendance compared to the previous year. The Committee supported the new January interventions—including daily absence reports, employer engagement and fortnightly faculty reviews—and agreed that these should provide more effective oversight. Members welcomed the development of a RAG-rated attendance dashboard and other improvements to data visibility, including faculty-level pilots and the introduction of a Director-led “HOT List” for learners missing multiple sessions. The forthcoming pilot of AI-driven automated calls was noted as an innovative approach intended to prompt quicker contact and better intelligence about reasons for absence.</p> <p>The Committee also reflected on persistent challenges, including low English and maths attendance, inconsistency in parental engagement, SEPO capacity constraints and wider societal factors affecting learner participation.</p> <p>No alternative options were proposed at this stage, and the Committee endorsed the recommendation to continue embedding recent interventions while further strengthening analysis and oversight. Members agreed that attendance monitoring should be increased to monthly or bi-monthly reporting to the Committee until a sustained improvement trend is evidenced. It was further agreed that English and maths attendance would remain a standing item within Quality reporting.</p> <p>The Committee noted the alignment of this work with Ofsted’s Education Inspection Framework, the College’s risk register and strategic documents relating to student engagement and safeguarding.</p>
162	<p>Progress Scores and Predicted Achievement Rates</p> <p>A summary of students’ progress for Full time courses and apprenticeships was given, with and early indication of likely achievement rates.</p> <p>An improved version of the maturing student tracking dashboard was presented. The data presented was live summative data and the user interface could now be fine-tuned.</p> <p>The team were also refining a predictive model based on student risk indicators (e.g. attendance and coursework submission) which would allow granular analysis and intervention planning. Early, top level results were presented.</p> <p>55% were on track to achieve their aspirational target grade. (top quartile performance)</p> <p>This was presented as a good position for term one. This was based on actual achievement data rather than teacher predictions.</p> <p>55% of Full-time learners were currently on track to achieve their aspirational target grade. This was based on summative coursework grades compared to their aspirational target grades so was personalised to each learner’s starting point.</p> <p>54% of learners with EHCPs were currently on track to achieve their aspirational target grade. Within statistical tolerances this matched the performance of their peers on the same courses.</p> <p>There are a small minority of courses where the technical reporting aspect was not yet complete so grades did not pull into the dashboard, though student progress was tracked and scrutinised in the same way outside of the dashboard. It was stated that the issues would be resolved soon.</p> <p>Apprentices were gaining good EPA grades, with current high grades at 52% and first-time passes >85%.</p> <p>Currently tracking towards 70% achievement</p>

	<p>Early risk indicators were improving with technology.</p> <p>Governors asked how could they be assured that the internal assessments on which the data was based was valid and accurate. SLT responded that the markus- AI tools were used to validate assessments.</p> <p>Reliability of predications were tested each year and disparities were challenged.</p> <p>Governors were assured that the relevant checks and balances were in place.</p> <p>Governors praised improved EHCP retention but asked what was being offered to students who were looking for alternative provision. There were small numbers with positive personal destinations.</p>
163	<p>KPIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention remains broadly in line with last year. • High-grade apprenticeship outcomes positive. • Attendance discussed within earlier agenda items. • Work placements have grown proportionately to T Level learner expansion. <p>The committee received an update on the status of Course Improvement Plans (CIPs) and Department Improvement Plans (DIPs) across several curriculum areas. The report highlighted progress made since each plan commenced, with particular focus on attendance, learner progress, assessment quality, stakeholder engagement, and the impact of leadership changes.</p>
164	<p>CIPS and DIPS</p> <p>Vocational Studies remained within CIP monitoring due to the continued positive impact of interventions and an increased Ofsted focus. Attendance had decreased slightly compared with the previous year, but improvements had been made in EHCP outcomes, community participation, and formative assessment routines. The vacancy for a Teaching & Learning Inclusion Lead had now been filled, providing additional support.</p> <p>In Business Management & Administration, monitoring continued to show improved tracking, assessment planning, enrichment, and stakeholder engagement. Learner satisfaction had increased for first-year cohorts, though second-year satisfaction required further attention. Feedback mechanisms had been strengthened, and the interim Head of Faculty alongside a new Curriculum Lead were in place to drive improvement.</p> <p>Joinery continued under DIP monitoring. Attendance had risen from November but remained below last year's figure. Retention was strong at 100%, with high-repetition of practical skills building confidence and precision. Staff development through How2 strategies had benefitted most teachers, and further engagement opportunities such as competitions and community projects were planned.</p> <p>Motor Vehicle also remained under DIP monitoring. Attendance was static at 82%, and employer engagement required improvement despite successes through the RSG. A programme restructure had enhanced assessment planning, and learner satisfaction had improved across all programmes. A strengthened professional culture was reported, including a no-phones policy and consistent use of inclusive learning strategies. The quality team expressed concerns about MV due to continuing staff absences, they mentioned weekly monitoring may be necessary. Governors asked what that meant and questioned the impact of increased monitoring. The SLT explained that interventions may change or escalate and additional involvement and support for the department would be provided. The Governors questioned which interventions were most impactful, and the input from new Inclusion leads had been highlighted by students and parents as having made a positive difference.</p> <p>A Level Philosophy continued with its CIP, with attendance slightly reduced since November. Learner satisfaction was improving but remained below KPI. The focus was on developing pedagogy that supports higher grades.</p>

	<p>Law remained under CIP monitoring due to low grades and unreliable mock outcomes. External subject specialist support was being deployed to improve content delivery and learner engagement. Learner survey results had improved during Term 1, and teaching observations had provided assurance about quality.</p> <p>Criminology was progressing through its CIP, with attendance marginally reduced since November but still strong overall. Programme planning and starting point assessments had been reviewed with clear actions. Controlled assessment scheduling had been strengthened to ensure readiness, and feedback processes were under review.</p> <p>Functional Skills (Apprenticeships) showed early positive impact from a redesigned delivery model implemented in Term 1. Attendance had improved above KPI, and the first cohort had seen improved outcomes in maths and English. Increased use of 'Century' had supported learner progress, and sequencing had been improved with embedded formative checks and clearer contextualisation of tasks.</p> <p>Hairdressing (Apprenticeship and PT Adults) entered improvement monitoring in December following concerns around retention, achievement, and transparency of progress. Attendance was strong, but fortnightly review meetings had been scheduled to provide additional support.</p> <p>The committee noted that curriculum areas remained at varying stages of the improvement cycle, with some demonstrating sustained progress and others requiring continued monitoring before they could be considered for removal from the CIP/DIP process.</p> <p>The governors recognised that the CIPs and DIPs were based on a deficit model and questioned whether departments or courses may benefit from being placed in them when they were experiencing high levels of change rather than once problems were detected.</p>
165	<p>Student Satisfaction Term 1 report</p> <p>Themes and Insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good QTLA and learner experience outcomes across the survey's nine questions. • Clear links emerging between CIPs/DIPs and satisfaction levels. • Work scrutiny identifies flags aligned to KPIs. <p>Governors queried how student misunderstanding of survey items is mitigated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A guidance sheet accompanies the survey to aid clarity. • Trends/patterns considered more instructive than individual responses. <p>Engagement with departments on survey outcomes varies; SS informs but does not solely drive CIPs and DIPs.</p> <p>The Committee received an update on the Term 1 (25/26) Learner Survey on Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA). It was reported that overall feedback from learners remained consistently strong across the college, with high levels of satisfaction in teaching quality, learning experience and assessment. The majority of departments and provision types continued to perform above KPI, and in many cases significantly above, demonstrating a robust level of assurance about the learner experience.</p> <p>The survey achieved an 81% response rate, generating 2,014 responses, and was open to all continuing learners across full-time, part-time adult, apprenticeship and higher education provision. The survey aligned with the college's Teaching & Learning Charter and mirrored Ofsted's evaluative approach, enabling early identification of strengths and areas requiring attention.</p> <p>Headline findings showed that overall satisfaction had increased to 4.35/5, exceeding KPI and outperforming the previous year. The quality of teaching was rated 4.20/5, also above KPI, with apprentices, adults and HE learners scoring particularly highly.</p> <p>The Committee noted that some departmental variation persisted. Whilst many departments—such as Access to HE, Music, Sport, Care, Counselling, Construction and Hair & Beauty—achieved very high satisfaction and teaching scores, a small number of areas were highlighted for targeted action. Engineering, Business, English & Maths and elements of Functional Skills presented amber or red assurance ratings across multiple provision types. These areas already had improvement plans in place, and additional monitoring and support were being applied.</p>

	<p>Learners with EHCPs continued to report positive experiences, particularly in Retail & Hospitality, Hair & Beauty, Creative subjects and Sport. However, their feedback also reflected the same pattern of variability seen in the wider full-time provision. Qualitative themes reinforced the high value learners placed on their relationships with staff, practical learning opportunities, and supportive learning environments. However, they also identified several areas requiring improvement: more consistent and actionable feedback; stronger organisation and communication around timetables and expectations; improved access to support services; and increased opportunities for applied or industry-linked learning within theory-heavy programmes.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the planned actions arising from the survey, which include: enhanced work scrutiny focusing on feedback quality; curriculum-wide auditing of practical and applied learning opportunities; improved learner-facing communication systems; targeted intervention for departments with repeated amber/red indicators (notably Engineering, English & Maths and Animal Care); and continued recognition of strong practice through CPD and internal communications.</p> <p>Overall, the Committee concluded that the findings provided strong assurance of high-quality teaching and learning across the college. The improvement actions were appropriately focused, with issues relating to consistency and communication rather than fundamental concerns about provision quality. Targeted monitoring was to continue into Term 2, with particular emphasis on the small number of departments identified as needing additional support.</p>
166	<p>Inclusion</p> <p>The newly return Director of Inclusion was welcomed back from maternity leave. The Director reported, that there had been realignment within the Inclusion team, with additional Inclusion Leads appointed in September 2025. From 5.5 FTE up to 6.9 FTE. This had provided increased levels of support, particularly in Maths and English. The feedback from Curriculum areas was strong and positive. The team recognised that there was little quantitative data to illustrate their impact yet but the qualitative feedback was good from staff, students and parents. The committee asked that the feedback loops be strengthened using retention and attendance data for the next meeting. SENCO roles had been clarified to ensure they maintained a specialist focus rather than as had previously been the case, becoming overburdened with administration. The committee confirmed that there was 100% compliance with annual reviews. They noted that EHCP enrolments continue to rise, with 10% of Kendal College learners with EHCPs, this was above the national average and these numbers were likely to continue to rise, given the additional funding allocation from the Local Authority. The authorities were predicting an increase in LINK2 learners. Work was underway to improve quality and smartness of EHCP review targets, with associated staff training.</p>
167	<p>Curriculum planning</p> <p>The DPES presented the new Curriculum planning system, in the absence of the Principal. A new template was shared with the committee and they noted this had been introduced with the Heads of Faculty (HOFs) before Christmas and they all had meetings planned for March.</p> <p>A new trigger system was in place, so that if a course had been underperforming, the HOF would need to justify its continuation. That could be on the basis of Social Value, Skills demand or contribution. The paper presented outlined how curriculum planning, labour market intelligence and financial modelling were now integrated into a coherent, evidence-led framework designed to align curriculum intent with local skills needs, financial sustainability and the college's strategic priorities. Governors were informed that this approach marked a deliberate shift from a predominantly top-down model to a structured bottom-up methodology, aimed at improving ownership, clarity and organisational health.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the College has commissioned RCU to provide external labour market intelligence to inform planning. RCU would deliver market analysis</p>

	<p>reports and curriculum data packs identifying learner trends, market share, qualification-level patterns and competitive pressures. This ensured that decision-making was based on robust, standardised evidence rather than anecdotal assumptions, providing governors with enhanced assurance regarding alignment to local need and opportunities for growth or rationalisation.</p> <p>Each Head of Faculty would lead curriculum planning through a dedicated Faculty Planning Folder, consolidating RCU data, internal performance measures (recruitment, retention, achievement, contribution) and local intelligence. These evidence-led business plans would articulate curriculum intent, rationale for maintaining or adjusting provision, staffing requirements and financial contributions. Governors welcomed this shift toward greater ownership, noting that it promoted financial literacy, leadership development and clearer accountability at faculty level.</p> <p>The Committee was asked to note the new framework, confirm assurance that governance controls are in place, and provide strategic challenge where required—especially in relation to affordability, prioritisation and risk. This was a richer and more rigorous approach to Curriculum planning and was welcomed by the committee</p>
168	<p>Feedback from Ofsted training session</p> <p>The quality team confirmed that consultant Sarah Wilding had been impressed by the commitment of the governors involved and their understanding of the college. There was also positive feedback from governors that had attended the training.</p> <p>The committee recognised that the preparation had been useful in ensuring that TLA was a continued focus for all governors.</p>
169	<p>Policies and Reports</p> <p>Student Protection Plan approval recommended to Corporation.</p>
170	<p>Key points for discussion at board 28th January 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Progress monitoring • Inclusion update • Quality of TLA
171	<p>AOB</p> <p>College KPIs accepted</p> <p>Governors invited to:</p> <p>Development Day 5th Feb Skills show 11th Feb Apprentice celebration evening 12th Feb Open evening 2nd of March Calendar to be put on the teams page- action DGC</p>
172	<p>Next meeting 12th March 2026</p>