

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 19.11.25 on MS Teams at 4.00pm.

Present: Dr P Graham (Chair), Mr P Burke, Mr M Higgins, Mr G McAllister, Mr B Patterson, Mr S Shevlin, Mr D Small

In Attendance: Mrs C Brown, Ms H Hampsey, Mr S Lavery, Mr S McCartney, Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

75.1 Apologies

Dr Monteith

75.2 Declaration of Interests

No new declaration of interests.

75.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Document shared in advance: Draft minutes 30.09.25

On the proposal of DS and seconded by GMA, the draft minutes of 30.09.25 were approved.

75.4 Matters Arising

- Priority areas for focus in January 2026 would be on QIP planning and actions associated including: whole College QIP and Traineeship and ES within QIP.
- BP was confirmed as Safeguarding governor. Training for BP would take place on 3.12.26 and would be available for new members going forward.
- Expressions of interest were sought for the position of Committee Vice-Chair from the 21.1.26 meeting.
- It was agreed that the Report on Lessons Learnt would be considered at the March meeting

75.5 Chair's Communication/Correspondence

Document shared in advance: Sector response on review of qualifications consultation

75.5.1 Response: Members noted concerns about the equivalency of essential skills.

DS asked for and received information on the impact of AI and ways to use it with integrity.

MH pointed out the need to develop the FE curriculum to address the learning needs of a wide range of FE students, which required a customised approach.

BP queried any correlation between ES and GCSE levels and whether that was included in the response. CB advised that the current ES equivalence is 0.25 of a GCSE, although clarification was needed on how applicable that is to the FE sector.

PG advised that the Chair had been unable to attend the meeting and would instead join on 21.01.26.

75.5.2 Safeguarding: The Sector Safeguarding Group had previously met to review a revised sectoral policy. The policy would be presented to the Committee in due course and would

apply to all new members going forward. SMC highlighted several key points in the policy, including:

- Emphasis on supporting actions to address violence against women and girls;
- Reference included in the safeguarding section of the College website;
- New section on the safeguarding governor role.

DS emphasised the importance of safeguarding within the College and welcomed the clear focus demonstrated.

MH reported that sessions would start next week on a new training programme, 'White Ribbon Ending Violence, with all managers and staff encouraged to attend.

75.6 Terms of Reference

Documents shared in advance: Terms of Reference

Members noted that several changes were needed to the current TOR, including reinforcing the safeguarding component, updates to the quarterly workplan, and revised Committee membership information.

Action: KW would benchmark the TOR against NWRC and SRC documents.

Action: CB would update the quarterly workplan and ask SMC to review the safeguarding section.

Action: The draft document would be circulated to members for feedback before being presented at the next meeting.

75.7 Student President

The Chair welcomed PB to Committee. He noted the value placed on input and feedback from SMC and the student governor on the concerns and activities of the student body.

CB welcomed the reintroduction of the Winter Warmer Programme in the New Year.

SMC would update Committee when detail of the programme was received. He noted that lecturers had commented on the improvement in students' concentration during the last programme.

75.8 SEN Evaluation

PG advised confirmation by ETI that verbal feedback from the assessment could be acted upon as this would inform the content of the written report that would follow.

SS joined the meeting at 4.28pm.

CB reported very positive feedback regarding staff commitment, along with three actions:

- Develop ILPs further;
- Review of curriculum including balance between accredited and non-accredited aspects of learning programme;
- Further development of QIP and SER process to be more evaluative.

Based on the feedback received, CB questioned whether normal KPIs are applicable or need to be tailored for SEN. HH welcomed the feedback received. In relation to accredited/non-accredited programmes, she advised a circular had been developed which would be reviewed

in consultation with other colleges. The team had also started working on actions identified from the feedback.

PG highlighted comments emphasising the importance of positive and trusting relationships between students and staff, and the challenge this posed to FE when student information files were not transferred from schools.

CB referred to the evaluation being commissioned by DfE and potential for outcomes to include recommendations for policy work at the statutory level to address this shortfall.

MH advised that the College had one of the highest levels of SEN in the FE sector and that the transfer of information would assist in tailoring individual programmes. He welcomed the feedback from ETI while noting the costs of any additional support provision.

75.9 Curriculum Director Summary Report

Document shared in advance: Curriculum Director Report September – end October

CB highlighted several key points in the report, including: CDP 25/26; the curriculum strategy, which will be updated to align with the corporate plan; WAPP; and sectoral matters.

PG mentioned the highly strategic priorities being discussed by the Curriculum Development Working Group (CDWG) and believed there should be a chance for Education Committee Chairs to discuss the future shape of that strategic direction.

DS acknowledged very good performance across all KPI areas. He welcomed the Year 10 June HE taster sessions and asked if these would be repeated at a later stage, eg Year 12.

HH advised that these sessions were specific to the WAPP plan; however, sessions being held in week commencing 1.12.25 were open to a wider audience.

GMA welcomed the taster sessions and asked if these could take place with children at an earlier stage in order to build relationships.

HH advised that this was being looked at by the Marketing Department and plans for events would be shared when available.

75.10 CDP

Documents shared in advance: Presentation; Progress Report 24/25

HH guided members through the presentation and, with the 24/25 year now concluded, highlighted areas of success and points for improvement. Regarding 25/26 and PT HE and FE, she mentioned that, although the figures suggested otherwise, target numbers would still be achieved.

6.00pm SMC and PB left the meeting.

PG suggested that some figures should be included in the Principal's monthly message.

MH noted that HH has presented the figures to senior managers for sharing with their teams.

Action: MH will include figures in his November message.

MH highlighted the promising core foundation and sustainable growth reflected in the KPIs and noted the need to now consider non-accredited provision for future growth in numbers.

PG and DS echoed these comments and welcomed strong performance in core areas.

DS referred to the DfE risk assessment and suggested that the College's strong performance be reflected in response to the Department.

MH advised that, with the agreement of CMK, he had gone back to DfE with the same points and would continue to emphasise success in strong areas.

MH advised that the accountability meeting with the Permanent Secretary would take place on 11.12.25 and he would bring the College's success on targets and outcomes to the table at the meeting. He also noted that the College had the lowest sickness absence figures in the sector.

75.11 Self Evaluation and QIP

Documents shared in advance: SER/QIP including Traineeship and Essential Skills Update; Traineeship Review Letter; College Improvement Plan Review

PG advised that staff who had worked on documents would attend the Committee going forward.

CB noted the timeline of work, including discussions on ES and Traineeship at both college and sector levels, with action plans now nearing final revision.

Action: CB will share revised plans and response, including signposting of matters added, with members by correspondence.

MH referred to comments made in feedback on the improvement plan regarding some reporting mechanisms, given that results and actions had been clearly presented to the Committee, and would reflect this in the response

PG advised discussion with LW during the week who considered that governors were afforded ample discussion time on items.

75.12 New and Updated Policies

Documents shared in advance: Artificial Intelligence; Research Ethics; Curriculum Planning

CB outlined the context for the new AI and Research Ethics policies and the updated CP policy, all of which had been through the consultation process and approved by the PWG.

DS welcomed the policies and noted the use of AI across the FE sector.

CB advised that AI within Teaching & Learning was being progressed within the Digital/IT curriculum hub, AI had been incorporated into the TOR and agenda to facilitate shared thinking and practice across the sector.

SS queried frequency of reviews in response to change. CB advised that pace of change would inform reviews, with the next date set as September 2026.

CB noted that relevant policies were being submitted to the Committee for oversight, having been previously discussed by the A&R Committee whose role would be to track and oversee the PWG workplan.

75.13 Any Other Business

PG noted that this was SS's last Committee meeting and thanked him for his contribution to the Committee and the GB.

75.14 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 21.01.26

The meeting closed at 5.30pm.

Dr P Graham, Chair 

Date 21.01.2026

Mrs K Wallace, Secretary 