

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 18 March 2026 on MS Teams at 4.00pm

Present: Dr P Graham (Chair), Mr P Burke, Ms J Hemphill, Mr M Higgins, Mr B Patterson

In Attendance: Mr A Ballantyne, Mrs C Brown, Ms H Hampsey, Mr S McCartney, Mr M Walker, Mrs K Wallace (Secretary)

77.1 Apologies

None.

77.2 Declaration of Interests

PG reminded members of his connection to ETI.

77.3 Minutes of Last Meeting – 21 January 2026

On the proposal of MH and seconded by JH, the minutes were agreed.

77.4 Matters Arising

No outstanding matters. Ongoing items addressed within agenda.

77.5 Chair's Communication / Correspondence

(i) Strategy Day — Reflections and Follow-up Actions

PG commended the Strategy Day as the strongest to date; a clear set of actions will follow under the Curriculum Director's report. Strong focus on curriculum included:

- Exploration of high quality provision with regional impact and value for money.
- Establishment of a small Task & Finish Group (T&F) with clear Terms of Reference and representation from governors, HH's area and input from external stakeholders.
- MH advised wider management team asked for feedback.
- CB outlined sequencing between the Curriculum Strategy and Corporate Plan, noting the Curriculum Strategy may be completed first, with corporate implications then broadened.

Actions:

- **PG, MH and CMK to finalise ToR and membership for the T&F Group and mobilise it by early April.**
- **MH to provide feedback from wider management engagement.**
- **CB to circulate the Curriculum Strategy timeline in April, aligned to T&F Group ToR**

(ii) Phase 2 SEN Evaluation — ETI Verbal Report / MASN

PG reminded members of the previous ETI verbal update.

The Committee considered the MASN letter (9 March) and the two-week submission window. CB reported significant forecasting work underway for FT HE intake in September 2026, including impact of new OU partnership programmes launched in 2025 (resulting in Year 1 and Year 2 cohorts in 2026/27). Four programmes fall under “new or reinstated”, supporting the proposed uplift.

Support was sought for a MASN bid for 255 FT places (an increase of 38 from 1 Nov 2025 enrolments). Forecasts would remain realistic, highlight growth opportunities, articulate programme pathways and align with DfE’s wider ambitions.

MH noted the bid reflects the College’s longer term strategic direction, with growth targeted in sustainable curriculum areas.

Action: Committee endorsed a MASN bid for 255 FT places for submission by Friday 20 March.

At this point in the meeting it was agreed to re-order the agenda.

77.8 Safeguarding Mid-Year Report

SMC provided a high-level overview of his report and noted a moderate increase on interventions compared to the previous year as a result of improved awareness and reporting. He outlined a trend for more students presenting with complex needs including emerging issues around online-based harm (eg gambling), self-harm, housing and homelessness. He confirmed continued work with Operation ENCOMPASS and close collaboration with LENA to provide counselling and support services.

MH thanked SMC for the comprehensive report. He queried involvement of specialist community organisations where appropriate. SMC confirmed the College’s role centres on student safety which includes signposting to specialist support agencies as appropriate.

MH referred to the current meningitis outbreak in England and advised student services to plan for steps to be taken to prepare the College. The importance of widening communications was also noted.

BP queried SMC on roll-out of Safeguarding training for all Governors and noted that this was currently in progress.

Actions:

- **The safeguarding paper would be amended by SMC to reflect governance reporting route and Committee membership of the appointed Safeguarding Governor, before submission to the Department.**
- **Safeguarding training to be made available to all Governors by June 2026.**

77.9 Student Experience Mid-Year Report

SMC highlighted outcomes from the Student Experience Forum (SEF), noting strong attendance, positive feedback from 1,400 students and clearly identified follow-up actions. Online delivery will continue given the reach achieved.

PB summarised feedback from Class Representatives, reporting a positive learning experience and no significant curriculum concerns. Suggestions for improvements have been passed to management teams.

Members emphasised the importance of tracking key themes and providing six-month follow-ups. PB identified the need to address cases where students had not received assessment plans as a priority

Actions:

- **Remedial plan to ensure all students receive assessment plans.**
- **PG will attend the next online SEF.**
- **Six-month thematic tracking and follow up report.**
- **Consider MH/PG attendance at the Students' AGM in May.**
- **Mid-year update to be circulated to the Governing Body.**

77.6 Curriculum Director Summary Report (February-March 2026)

CB noted a short reporting period (due to half term) but positive progress overall, highlighting:

- Accountability Meeting (3 March): Time constraints prevented a full examination of in-year performance. DfE has scheduled a follow-up meeting (24 March) to address.
- ETI: Sector Insight visit to take place post Easter (1–2 days).
- Leadership: Following manager departure, interim leadership arrangements are being prioritised. Broader SMT structure alignment will also be reviewed. LM's contribution to the College was noted.

AB and MW joined the meeting at 4:45pm.

77.7 SEN Discrete Provision

AB presented the report and outlined progress, including:

- Highly committed staff across campuses.
- Transition from OCN to Pearson Entry Level qualifications over two years; staff training underway.
- Strong work based opportunities (e.g. Barista bar in MF; rollout to NA planned).
- Development of internal and external placement opportunities; proposal for a workplace coordinator on each campus.
- Enhanced marketing and parent guidance, including a "one-stop-shop" approach.
- Governance linkage and alignment with Curriculum Strategy priorities.

AB noted the support of the CAMs in development and implementation of the plans.

PG thanked the team and suggested that one of the CAMs present the next report.

Action: Consider future presentation by CAM(s) to showcase progress.

77.10 QIP Action Plans (January-March 2026)

HH updated on WC Traineeship and Literacy and Numeracy progress (Jan–Mar) as follows:

Traineeship QIP:

- Term 1 feedback incorporated into the QIP.
- Progress reviews completed and action plans implemented via CAMs.
- Canvas evidence capture site introduced for consistent PBL and TSkills recording.
- Work placement completion rates improving; expansion ongoing.
- Retention strong at 90% (against 88% target) as of 28 Feb 2026.
- Performance submitted for 20 March sector deadline.

Essential Skills QIP:

- 85% attendance during mock and first exam series (approx. 15% increase).
- OCN results expected end March 2026.
- Retention at 90%; attendance at 80% supported by targeted interventions.
- Strong cross-department collaboration noted.

Quality Enhancements:

- Standardisation progressing; Numeracy Canvas pages showcased at QIT Conference.
- Phase 1 to complete by June 2026.
- GCSE pilot: 66% pass (Maths) and 100% (English) in November series; further entries planned for June.
- Timetabling underway to embed GCSE provision for 2026/27.

Forward Actions (to June 2026):

- Learning & Development Working Group to drive digital skills actions.
- Sector wide employer feedback repository being explored; workshop held at SERC.
- Continued work on tutorial content, data analysis and entry profile analysis to support target setting ongoing. Mid-year student survey will be aligned to sector QIP priority areas.

Key risks and mitigations:

- Work placement availability remains challenging; mitigations ongoing.
- Attendance variability may impact achievement; interventions in place.
- Data capacity limitations under review.
- Learner entry profiles continue to be monitored to support realistic target setting.

77.11 Sustainability

In the context of the report provided, MW summarised key developments:

- Student engagement: PV provision (Year 1) planned for 2025/26.
- Industry alignment: Strong engagement with employers; pilot delivery models being tested.
- External programmes: Two EA programmes progressing; two staff travelling to South Africa for programme delivery training.
- Forward planning:
 - Further strengthening of infrastructure and employer capability.
 - Short in-house CPD/upskilling programmes.
 - Exploration of Building Services expansion and short course offers.

Members discussed the proposals put forward. PG noted strong alignment with Strategy Day themes, including a potential sector Lead role for College and short CPD provision. MH highlighted College's recognised leadership in hydrogen and ambitions to embed sustainability across all curriculum areas.

Members were invited to contact MW with any further queries.

77.12 Any Other Business

None.

77.13 Date of Next Meeting

27 May 2026

The meeting closed at 5.44pm.

Dr P Graham, Chair



Date 27.05.26

Mrs K Wallace, Secretary



Action Log

No	Item	Action	Owner	Timescale/ Comment	Status
ED1	77.5.i	Strategy Day: Finalise ToR and membership for the T&F Group and mobilise it by early April.	PG/ MH/ CMK		
ED2		Provide feedback from wider management engagement.	MH		
ED3		Circulate the Curriculum Strategy timeline in April, aligned to T&F Group ToR.	CB		
ED4	77.8	Amend safeguarding paper to to reflect governance reporting route and Committee membership of the appointed Safeguarding Governor, before submission to the Department.	SMC		
ED5	77.9	Student Experience: Remedial plan to ensure all students receive assessment plans.			
ED6		PG to attend next online SEF.	PG		
ED7		Six-month thematic tracking and follow up report.			
ED8		Attendance at Students' AGM in May.	MH/PG		
ED9		Circulate mid-year update to the GB.	KW		Closed
ED10	77.7	SEN Discrete Provision: Future presentation by CAM(s) to showcase progress.	AB		