LEEDS COLLEGE OF BUILDING

QUALITY, CURRICULUM & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1 July 2025 at 4.00pm, Meeting Room 1, North Street / Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT:

Julie Tolley (JT)	Chair & External Governor
Steve Carmody (SCa)	External Governor *(attended via Teams)*
James Dunford (JD)	External Governor *(attended via Teams)*
Sarah Gibson (SG)	External Governor *(attended via Teams)*
Mick Norton (MN)	Staff Governor *(attended via Teams)*
Dave Russell (DR)	External Governor *(attended via Teams)*

ATTENDANCE: 6 / 10 = 60% (KPI 80%) Cumulative attendance: 35 / 54 = 65%

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rob Holmes (RH)	Vice Principal – Curriculum, Quality & Innovation
Steve Connell (SCo)	Assistant Principal – Study Programmes
Chris Tunningley (CT)	Assistant Principal – Adults & Apprenticeships
Sarah Sunderland (SS)	Head of University Centre (Agenda Item QCP/25/142)
Jane Taylor-Holmes (JTH)	Director of Governance
Nancy Fearnside (NF)	PA to Strategic Leadership Team (Minutes)

Min. Ref.	Minutes	Actions
	QCP-25-137 - Apologies for Absence	
338	Apologies for absence were received Sandra Burnhill (External Governor), Nikki Davis (Principal & Chief Executive), Sean McDonagh-Rushfirth (Student Governor) and Mobin Negareshfard (Student Governor).	
	QCP-25-138 - Determination of Observers / Attendees	
339	Members agreed attendees at the meeting as per the attendance list above.	
	QCP-25-139 – Declaration of Interests in any Agenda items	
340	There were no declarations of interest.	
	QCP-25-140 – Minutes of the previous meeting	
341	**Resolved:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 April 2025 were accepted as a true record, with one exception: paragraph 221 should read JF (not JT). The minutes would be amended.	**JTH/NF July 2025**
	QCP-25-141 – Matters Arising	
342	Members noted the updates recorded against the matters arising.	
343	Item QCP-25-128 (282): JTH explained that this was not due until October 2025.	
344	Item QCP-25-128 (283): SCo commented that he had contacted Tom Alton (TA) from East Riding of Yorkshire Council and after meeting with him had referred him to Sarah Sunderland (SS). SS explained that she had met with TA and they had discussed some challenges TA was experiencing in relation to Apprenticeships, there was a follow up meeting planned to explore how the College could best support.	

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345	SS commented that she had asked TA if he would be interested in joining the College's Employer Advisory Board. SS explained that she had sent information through that TA could share with other partners.	
346	Item QCP-25-130 (306): CT commented that a meeting had now been arranged with SCa to further discussions around Chartered Engineering and Masters, an update would be provided at a future meeting.	**CT / SCa Autumn 2025**
	QCP-25-142 – Spotlight on HE	
347	Committee members welcomed Sarah Sunderland (SS), Head of University Centre to the meeting. SS provided an update on the current position and strategic developments within the University Centre.	
348	SS commented that the College had received a Silver Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) award (a system in England that assesses and rates universities and colleges on the quality of their teaching, learning, and student outcomes), which confirmed the student experience and student outcomes were typically very high quality.	
349	SS outlined the structure within the University Centre and explained that a restructure was underway to develop subject-specific expertise across Levels 4-6.	
350	SS commented that the Curriculum Plan detailed 741 starts / progressions in 2025/26, with natural growth of an additional 136 students, giving an overall total of 877. SS commented that a new Architectural Degree was planned for 2026/27.	
351	SS explained that clear internal progression pathways had been established from T-Levels and Level 3 programmes into Higher Education at Levels 4,5 & 6. Engagement with other College departments to widen access and participation was underway.	
352	SS explained that the University Centre operated on semester-based block delivery model which was designed with employers to accommodate workplace demands.	
353	SS commented that the Level 4 progression consisted of HE blocks, which had been staggered to maximise lecturers' specialist knowledge and teaching hours. SS commented that February starts had been introduced, particularly for Civil Engineering, to align with professional body assessment schedules. SS explained that the block plan had been adjusted to fit the available space in the College and discussion took place with employers to ensure the arrangement of the block plan met their needs.	
354	SS commented that in 2021/22 there had been one Degree group (9 students) and this would increase to 20 groups (239 students) for 2025/26, it was acknowledged that this was a significant increase and SS commented that there was a plan for future and ongoing growth.	
355	SS explained that current Degree programmes were validated by Leeds Beckett University (LBU) and London South Bank University (LSBU). SS commented that discussions were ongoing to move the Civil Engineering Degree from LBU to LSBU to support expansion and address some concerns regarding direct competition.	

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356	SS commented that Integrated Degrees, where the End Point Assessment (EPA) was required before the completion of the Degree, were in place for some degree programmes and Committee members agreed that this was important to ensure that students were required to complete the EPA before students were able to graduate to ensure that the Apprenticeship was completed.	
357	SS commented that new branding was in place and increasing awareness of construction careers in schools and colleges was essential. SS referred to the Bridge (pre-university) programme and it was agreed that it was essential to promote and showcase the impact, career growth and potential earnings higher education could provide.	
358	SS commented that growth was planned for 2026/27 in Design and Construction Management and Civil Engineering Degrees. SS explained that the University Centre currently had 301 students with three employers, which was a potential risk for the College, and there was a focus on working with more larger employers.	
359	SS explained that an evidence log would be created that covered the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration	
360	SS commented that the Joint Board of Moderators (JBM) had reviewed the Civil Engineering course and the visit had been very successful, with only two recommendations. SS explained that one recommendation was to increase the number of staff with ICE membership and provided information on how this was being progressed. The second recommendation was to look at the College resources in terms of laboratories and teaching facilities. SS explained that the hydraulics laboratory had been moved from North Street to a more appropriate area at South Bank, the STEM room at South Bank would be reconfigured to enable more experiments to be carried out, and the concrete laboratory at North Street would be expanded over the summer.	
361	SS commented that current predicted achievement rates were 69% at Level 4 and 28% at Level 5-6, with targeted interventions in place to improve outcomes.	
362	SS detailed the support in place for EPA completion, this included: • EPA workshops and Mock Interviews, for apprentices and employers to attend. • Regular liaison with professional bodies. • Membership benefits – professional bodies were invited in to discuss the benefits of membership and available resources. • Independent EPA assessors. • Facilitation of EPA interviews; professional bodies were invited to conduct their EPA interviews at the College, which strengthened relationships and provided convenience and familiarity for the Apprentices. • Networking events. • Employer visits. • Webinars to keep employers updated with changes to Apprenticeships and improve their understanding.	
363	SS referred to a number of student success stories which highlighted the positive impact of the University Centre’s provision.	
364	JT thanked SS for her presentation and asked members if they had any questions.	

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365	SG commented that she was struck by the growth from 2021 to 2025. SG questioned what the implications were for the College to respond to the growth, if the College had a growth target and what was the unique selling point for the College in this area.	
366	SS commented that the facilities available did not match the scale of delivery, however this had now been resolved. SS explained that they were currently looking into splitting the University Centre into two areas, one for FE and for HE, together with targeting more employers to grow student numbers. SS commented that if a couple of large employers were targeted then numbers would increase, however the College would need to ensure the space and structure was in place for such growth.	
367	SS commented that the College results were much better than the universities; typically LCB students were achieving more First Class Degrees. SS explained that class sizes were typically smaller numbers which appealed to students. The College also responded well to employer need, for example by offering block release which most universities did not offer or making sure that blocks were not scheduled at the end of the month to ensure students were in work during to busier periods.	
368	SCa commented on the construction provision across the sector and the predicted skills shortages in this area over the next 10 to 15 years and suggested the College was in a good place to address this.	
369	SCa commented that LBU were not running their Apprenticeship course this year and SS explained that this was due to their last Ofsted results, however LBU were expected to be running this again in 2025/26. SCa suggested that this provided an opportunity and the College was well placed in the region to support more employers and students.	
370	SS commented that the College previously offered NVQs and had the assessors in place for the End Point Assessments.	
371	SCa commented that employers / contractors liked the block release models, although consultants were probably happy with day release. The flexibility offered by the College worked well.	
372	SCa commented that he would be meeting with CT to discuss supporting qualified staff across the College to progress to Chartered Engineering or Masters.	
373	JT raised a question regarding the internal progression rate and how the College was supporting students to progress through different levels of study, particularly in relation to raising aspirations. SS commented that the College had strong progression from Level 3 to higher levels, with most students continuing to Levels 4, 5 and 6. SS explained that efforts have been made to increase progression from other areas of the College by engaging with those departments and delivering targeted talks to raise awareness and interest.	
374	JD acknowledged the importance of internal progression and referred to the need for a clear illustration of the College's educational pathways. JD suggested this model should be promoted more actively within local schools to encourage earlier engagement with learners, increase participation from underrepresented groups and build awareness of long-term progression opportunities from age 16.	

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375	SS commented that more work could be done to engage with schools and external partners. SS explained that the Bridge course was key in widening access, particularly for career changes, people moving into technical roles and those returning to education.	
376	DR referred to the College's USP and commented that the College had a good reputation for Apprenticeships that carried forward to the Level 4, 5 & 6 Apprenticeships. DR asked if the College had been inspected by Ofsted for the Level 4 and above Apprenticeships.	
377	RH commented that Ofsted Inspectors did review the College's higher-level Apprenticeship provision over three days of the March 2024 Inspection and a Grade 2 (Good) was received for the College's overall Apprenticeships provision.	
378	SS left the meeting at this point.	
379	**Resolved:** Committee members received the presentation and update on HE.	
	QCP-25-143 – Quality Report	
380	SCo and CT presented Agenda Item QCP-25-143 and provided an overview.	
381	SCo commented that a three-year increase hade been seen in attendance, retention and achievement, which was very pleasing for the College and showed that the strategies and hard work were having a positive impact.	
382	SCo commented that predicted Education & Training achievement overall was 85.2% and this would be a 5.9% increase from last year. SCo commented that all levels showed improvement, particularly Level 2 with a 7.7% increase.	
383	SCo commented that Performance Reviews were carried out recently and the predicted achievements reported were the worst-case scenario and the figure could improve.	
384	CT commented that predicted achievement for Adults was 91%, an increase of 5.6% from last year. Level 3 had increased by 25% and strong performance across all Faculties was noted. CT commented that the Adult Skills Funding allocation had been fully utilised or the first time in a number of years; Faculties were aware of the budget available which helped with their Curriculum Plans. RH commented that if 91% was achieved this would be a significant improvement from the Ofsted inspection when it was 77%.	
385	CT commented that Apprenticeship achievement was currently 62.6%, which was an increase of 2.2% from last year and slightly above the National Provider Group Rate of 62.3%. CT commented that the focus now would be to ensure any withdrawals were minimised and targeted support interventions put in place to support students.	
386	JD commented that better attendance led to better outcomes and asked how sustainable this was and if there was anything else that could be done.	

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387	SCo explained that a number of strategies had been put in place to improve retention and achievement. SCo commented that an increase in attendance on theory sessions had been seen, compared to practical sessions. A full 'At-Risk' week had taken place where students at risk were identified and focused interventions put in place; this strategy would continue next year. SCo commented that the quality of Teaching & Learning had improved and the Quality team were proactive in supporting improvement in teaching practice. SCo commented that the implementation of the immersive classroom and the Heads of College Experience, Behaviour & Engagement were also having a positive impact.	
388	RH commented that various restructures had taken place over the last three years to ensure the right people were in the right roles and emphasised that a consistent approach was key.	
389	JT referred to some of the areas where attendance rates were good (e.g. Roofing, Tiling) and other areas it was not as good (e.g. Multi Skills) and queried whether this was due to the ability of the students. SCo commented that Roofing and Tiling courses were Apprenticeships only, whereas Multi Skills students generally came to the College with low starting levels and although attendance at College may only be 75% this was a significant improvement from their school attendance.	
390	CT commented that the new Apprenticeship structure had been embedded and felt this would drive improvements in Apprenticeships moving forward. CT commented that there was now a better understanding of Apprenticeships and the different funding streams across the College, with more challenge and accountability in place for managers.	
391	SCo commented that attendance overall was 85.1%, which had increased from 83% in the previous year, showing a three-year improvement trend.	
392	CT commented that substantial progress had been made in compliance with the OfS Conditions of Registration. New policies had been drafted and were awaiting approval (Free Speech, Harassment and Student Protection). CT commented that meetings had taken place with Faculty teams to ensure understanding of the Conditions of Registration and a central tracking system had been introduced to record evidence.	
393	CT outlined the key risks and recommendations in place in relation to the risks in the following areas: Apprenticeship data, OfS compliance, attendance and curriculum predicated achievements.	
394	**Resolved:** Committee members received the Quality Report.	
	QCP-25-144 – Student Voice / Student Feedback	
395	RH presented Agenda Item QCP-25-144 and explained that he had intended to involve the Student Governors in this item but they had now successfully completed their programme and were no longer in College. Committee members congratulated Student Governors on the successful completion of their programme.	
396	RH explained that the full Student Perception of College (SPOC) end of year report had been uploaded to the Governor Hub for information.	

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397	RH commented that this survey had been conducted between April and May 2025 and 490 students had completed the survey, a significant increase from last year's response of 262.	
398	RH outlined some of the key highlights from the survey: • Overall student satisfaction had increased by 9% from the Term 1 survey and 2% from last year's end of year survey. • 96% of students felt safe at the College, an 11% increase from the Term 1 survey. RH commented that this was a notable improvement and aligned with the findings from the Ofsted visit where 98% of over 500 student respondents also reported feeling safe. RH commented that initial concerns in relation to safeguarding (reported at a previous meeting) were largely related to travel to and from the College, rather than the College environment. • 95% of students agreed that behaviour was well managed. RH commented that positive behaviour in classrooms had a direct impact on teaching and learning and a positive impact on attendance, retention and achievement. RH commented that the improvement reflected on the success of several key strategies, e.g. the Immersive Classroom, Professional Growth Observations, restorative practices and enhanced support from Progress Coaches and on-call managers. • The sense of belonging rating had dropped by 2%. Early analysis suggested that a contributor to the reduction in the rating were some challenges with belonging within the University Centre. RH commented that a review would be conducted to review the trends and the number of student forums would be increased to better understand the causes.	
399	RH commented that a "you said, we did" campaign would be launched in September to demonstrate how student feedback was driving change.	
400	RH commented that overall, the survey results showed a significant improvement compared to the results of both the beginning of the academic year survey and the survey undertaken over the same period in the previous year.	
401	SG commented that the lower scores around belonging appeared to be associated with female students or those experiencing learning difficulties, which had clear implications for diversity and inclusion. RH commented that out of the 490 respondents, 41 were female; this needed to be looked into further. The College had also identified a need to better support students with SEND.	
402	RH commented that the lower scores seemed to be concentrated in a specific area and the College needed to review the factors contributing to this. RH explained that the Quality team were currently working to identify the root causes and if the trend was consistent across the College, a wider intervention may be required. Committee members were pleased that this was being investigated further and noted that further feedback would be provided.	
403	SCa reinforced SG's comment regarding diversity and inclusion and commented that this was an important focus for the construction industry which the College needed to support and contribute to.	
404	RH commented that this topic would be revisited at the next meeting to discuss the outcomes and next steps following the review carried out at the beginning of the year.	**RH** **Autumn 2025**
405	**Resolved:** Committee members received the Student Voice / Student Feedback report and the Student Perception of College (SPOC) Report.	

Min. Ref.	Minutes	Actions
	QCP-25-145 – Quality Improvement Plan update	
406	RH presented Agenda Item QCP-25-145 and provided a brief overview.	
407	RH commented that the paper provided the Committee with an end of year update on the progress against actions identified within the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).	
408	RH commented that the Executive Summary outlined the key changes from April to date. RH explained that the only action not achieved related to raising GCSE English and maths High Grades.	
409	RH commented that the outcomes of the GCSE Summer exams were not yet known but explained that a significant improvement in attendance had been observed this summer compared to previous years. RH commented that the College was hopeful this would translate into improved achievement and progress, particularly in the attainment of High grades.	
410	RH commented that the QIP remained colour coded and risk rates for ease of reference.	
411	RH commented that this was the first time in his 20-year career that he had seen a QIP nearly completed at this stage of the year. RH commented that the staff teams had worked hard to drive improvements and felt the results reflected that effort.	
412	**Resolved:** Committee members received the Quality Improvement Plan update.	
	QCP-25-146 – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Action Plan	
413	RH presented Agenda Item QCP-25-146 and provided a brief overview.	
414	RH commented that the paper provided the Committee with an end of year update on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Action Plan.	
415	RH commented that there had been several developments, particularly regarding enhanced training for staff and broader student engagement activities.	
416	RH commented that the new DEIB Committee had now been in place for approximately eight months and was beginning to embed effectively, allowing the College to delve deeper into data analysis and use that to inform strategic direction, particularly in relation to diversity, inclusion and belonging.	
417	RH commented that the report outlined highlights and key aspects of the four strands. RH explained that Strands 2 & 4 were currently at risk of not being completed but both would be carried forward into the 2025/26 cycle.	
418	RH commented that findings from the recent Staff Workforce and Participation (SWAP) data collection would be incorporated into the 2025/26 plan and would form part of the on-going work of the DEIB Committee.	
419	JT raised the question of the collection of the Workforce Data. RH commented that it remained an on-going challenge to collect data on existing staff. HR had circulated a new data collection link to those staff where no data was available but emphasised that participation remained voluntary and the College was reliant on staff engagement to improve the quality and completeness of this information.	

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420	RH explained that the College was now asking new starters different, more detailed questions; whilst this was a positive step forward it had created a gap in historical data. The HR team would continue to work on this and report progress through the DEIB Committee.	
421	JT commented that it would be useful to receive an update after the summer break to assess the impact. RH commented that the DEIB Committee would report to the full Board next academic year, which would provide a more cohesive view of progress and help align staff and student strategies more effectively. RH explained that this issue also linked directly to the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) outlined in the College's Strategic Plan.	
422	SCa commented that the College's approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion had been a significant theme throughout the rebrand process. SCa queried if the College was capturing potential benefits that this may bring across the College, particularly in terms of recognition and engagement.	
423	RH commented that the Marketing team were tracking relevant metrics (e.g. website traffic and engagement rates) to assess the impact. RH explained that the rebrand was designed to position the College as a progressive and inclusive institution and over time it was hoped that this would be reflected in more diverse engagement and enrolments.	
424	RH commented that the College was currently exploring a partnership with an external organisation (Inspiring Futures), which was supported by the Department for Education (DfE). The initiative aimed to engage with under-represented communities to promote access to the College's provision.	
425	SG commented that it would be useful to see more emphasis on the importance of communication and marketing within the action plan. SG commented that she had met with Lyndsey Priestley (LP) recently and discussed how crucial communications and marketing were. SG explained that a specific area was photography and whilst the rebrand emphasised inclusive imagery, this also needed to apply to all types of photographs the College used.	
426	RH commented that LP was currently working on a new Marketing Strategy which would align with the College's growth targets. RH explained that LP also sat on the DEIB Committee.	
427	RH commented that there had been a period of significant transition for the College and historically there had been very little change. RH believed that there would be stronger integration with the Marketing Strategy moving forward.	
428	**Resolved:** Committee members received the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Action Plan.	
	QCP-25-147 – Access & Participation Statement	
429	CT presented Agenda Item QCP-25-147 and provided a brief overview.	
430	CT commented that the Access & Participation Statement was a requirement of the Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration and needed to be published on the College website. CT explained that the College did not need to submit a full Access & Participation Plan as the College does not charge above the basic fee cap.	

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431	CT outlined some of the key highlights in the Statement: • 54% of University Centre students were females (and mainly on Apprenticeships). • 23% of students identified as being from BAME (Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic) backgrounds. • Over 80% of University Centre students were employed; CT commented that employer engagement was critical to the College's access & participation efforts. • 48% of University Centre staff were female, with a significant proportion of staff from BAME or European backgrounds.	
432	CT commented that the strategic objectives included expanding participation across all groups and strengthening progression routes through Bridge courses and online / hybrid learning.	
433	DR commented that the statement was a useful document but suggested some areas should be updated to reflect current best practices and terms. DR commented that the use of BAME was outdated, and it may be more appropriate to use 'students from ethnic minority backgrounds' or 'minoritised ethnicity'. This would be reviewed.	
434	DR referred to the reference to specific regional areas as indicators of low participation and felt a more robust method would be to use postcode-level data such as Polar quintiles to assess participation more accurately and fairly.	
435	DR commented that a more thoughtful and data informed approach would reflect stronger engagement with the ethos of access and participation.	
436	**Resolved:** Committee members recommended the Access & Participation Statement to the Board for approval, subject to the points noted above.	
	QCP-25-148 – Free Speech & Academic Freedom Policy	
437	CT presented Agenda Item QCP-25-148 and provided an overview.	
438	CT commented that the Free Speech and Academic Freedom Policy was another requirement of the OfS Conditions of Registration, requiring all higher education providers to uphold and promote freedom of speech within the law.	
439	DR commented that the OfS published guidance last week in relation to what would be considered as upholding the law and protecting freedom of speech. It was agreed that CT would review the guidance to ensure the College's Policy aligned to this. DR also suggested that CT consider how other universities approach and manage this matter.	
440	SG raised the question regarding the requirement to adopt specific definitions of antisemitism and questioned whether this was still required. DR commented that this was no longer a central requirement.	
441	Committee members discussed the requirement to enable and encourage freedom of expression and commented that there may be some groups with extreme views who would be within the law to express those views unless they actually broke the law (e.g. hate speech, incitement to violence etc.). DR commented that there was no obligation to be tolerant under freedom of expression, which was different to the Prevent duty which encouraged British Values.	

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442	CT commented that the Policy also applied to staff; Section 7 had been included regarding academic staff.	
443	SG raised the question of external visitors who were invited to talk to student groups. CT commented that Section 6 covered this point. DR referred to the word “controversy” in the second bullet point under this item and suggested that this was removed. DR also suggested the word “controversial” was taken out of the second bullet point in Item 7. DR commented that this would avoid the implication that controversy alone was grounds to refuse entry to the College.	
444	DR commented that the College was not obligated to manage extreme views, only to ensure speakers / visitors remained within the law.	
445	**Resolved:** Committee members recommended the Free Speech & Academic Freedom Policy to the Board for approval, subject to the above points.	
	QCP-25-149 – Consideration of Risks relating to the Committee	
446	JTH presented Agenda Item QCP-25-149 and commented that no new risks had been added to the Register. JTH explained that the College was currently reviewing risks to ensure the description, mitigation and scores were correct. JTH commented that a session regarding risks would take place at the Governors Development Day.	
447	**Resolved:** Committee members noted the risks relating to the Committee and no changes were recommended.	
	QCP-25-150 – Matters to be reported to the Board	
448	The Committee had: Received a presentation and deep dive into HE provision. Received and considered the Quality Report and were pleased to note the strong progress made across provisions (especially over the past three years), with most areas predicted to improve on 2023/24 outcomes and exceed National Provider Group Rating. The Committee had noted the remaining risks and acknowledged that targeted support would be essential to maintain momentum an achieve the predicted achievements and strategic goals. Received the Student Perception of College (SPOC) report and welcomed increased participation and improvements in satisfaction scores against most of the key indicators. Actions were in place to improve scores where satisfaction was seen to be lower. Received the Quality Improvement Plan and noted progress against the six key actions. All actions were rated Green with the exception of improving high grades in English and maths GSCE, which was rated Amber. Received a progress update on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Action Plan and noted key developments since the last update, which included enhanced staff training, broader student engagement, curriculum inclusivity reviews and establishment of new support structures.	

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	Reviewed the Access & Participation Statement for HE and recommended this for approval to the Board, subject to some amendments to terminology and analysis of postcode information. Reviewed the Free Speech and Academic Freedom Policy and recommended this for approval to the Board, subject to an amendment around the word controversy. Received details of the risks relating to the Committee and noted that there had been no changes.	
449	**QCP-25-151 – Any Other Business** No other items of business were raised.	
450	**QCP-25-152 – Date of next meeting** The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 21 October 2025 at 4.00pm (North Street).	