

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE
HELD: on Thursday 27 November 2025 at 16:00 in 4F07- DHB Boardroom**

Present	In Attendance
Billy Khokhar (Chair)	Liz Leek (DCEO Quality & Curriculum)
Fiona Thompson (Vice Chair)	Allison Booth (Governance Director)
Chris Webb (CEO)	Rachel Henry (Deputy Governance Director)
Shahnaz Anwar-Bleem	Sharon Ryan (Designated Safeguarding Lead) (Items 1- 5)
Umar Rafique	
Maqadas Bashir	
Mussarat Ali	
Observing	
Gemma Simmons-Blench	
Apologies	
Sarah Towan	
Sarah Applewhite	
Alina Khan	

The quorum was four committee members

L/J Denotes the time any individual left/ re-joined the meeting.

Item		Action / Report Item
1.	<u>Introductions, Apologies for Absence and Disclosures of Interest</u>	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.	
1.2	Apologies were noted for Sarah Towan, Alina Khan and Sarah Applewhite.	
1.3	There were no disclosures of interest.	
2.	<u>Chair's action</u>	
2.1	There had been no use of Chair's actions since the last meeting.	
3.	<u>Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2025</u>	
3.1	RESOLVED: The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2025 were approved as an accurate record and would be signed by the Chair.	
4.	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
4.1	The Matters Arising Report was reviewed:	

	<p>23.2 – To consider onsite/online/hybrid meeting arrangements –It was agreed that the Q&S meetings would remain fully onsite in principle, but that online/hybrid attendance would be facilitated where necessary.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p><u>SEND Annual Report</u></p> <p>The DSL provided an overview of the SEND Annual Report 2024-25 which informed of the key headlines, outcomes and compliance around learners with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), including High Needs learners. The DSL advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In academic year 2024–25, 2079 students had informed the College that they had a disability. Of this group, 325 had an EHCP, and within that group, 298 received High Needs funding. • There were 42 apprentices with disabilities, compared to 134 in the previous year. The visibility of disability-related fields within the platform used to record apprentice information had been enhanced; however, for reasons not yet understood and still under investigation, there had been a significant decline in reported disclosures. Current indications suggest some reluctance among apprentices to disclose disabilities. • There had been an increase in Adult learners with a disability and a significant increase in the number of 16-18 learners with SEND. The DSL advised that the increases in adult learners with a disability and 16-18 learners with SEND were not proportionate to student growth. • The number of HE students with a disability in 2023-24 was 175 and in 2024-25, 174. • 22% of students considered themselves to have a disability. This was higher than national prevalence which was 17.7%, and that of Bradford District which was 19%. • 2.7% of learners were autistic which was considerably higher than the national prevalence. • High Needs-funded students’ main aim achievement was 94.2%, which was a 7.3% improvement on the previous year. • Learners with declared disabilities’ main aim achievement was 90.9% which was an increase of 2.9% on the previous year. • Retention for young people with SEND showed no significant gap with that of their non-disabled peers. Retention for High Needs-funded students in 2024-25 was outstanding at 96.9% (4.4% above national average). • Achievement in English and Maths for High Needs-funded students was lower at 64.8% compared to an overall achievement rate of 79%. 	

<p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p>The DSL provided an overview of the process through which students requiring additional support or reasonable adjustments were identified and supported. Members were assured that this was an established, ongoing annual process.</p> <p>The DSL reassured members that the necessary resources were in place to support the development of the College’s inclusive practice. The QER and RAISE processes ensured that inclusion was central to teaching practice, with robust monitoring systems established and the newly implemented SEND Toolkit providing a strong foundation for supporting students. The Committee were advised that the Disability Services budget included a contingency to ensure students continued to be well supported.</p> <p>A selection of student comments and case studies was shared, which the Committee agreed provided a useful insight into the high-quality work undertaken by the College. The many excellent outcomes were noted and members expressed that these should be formally recognised, requesting that their congratulations be conveyed to Disability Services.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: That the SEND Annual Report 2024-25 be recommended to the Corporation. <i>SR/L</i></p>	
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p><u>Executive Summary</u></p> <p>The DCEO Q&C presented the Executive Summary which highlighted key areas of focus on the agenda, drawing members’ attention specifically to the following reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEND Annual Report • HE and FE Self-Assessment Reports • The Character of the College 	
<p>7.</p> <p>7.1</p>	<p><u>Data Dashboard</u></p> <p>The CEO provided an overview of the Data Dashboard which represented the draft Q1 position and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression Level 2 to Level 3+ (including Apprenticeships) – 43.10% - This had improved from the 2024-25 end-of-year position. • % GCSE English and Maths lesson attendance – 72% - This represented a 20% improvement from the 2024-25 end of year position. By contextualising Maths and English learning within curriculum areas, it was expected that this would improve engagement, as students would better understand the practical relevance of these subjects. 	

<p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p> <p>7.4</p> <p>7.5</p>	<p><u>7.1 Q1 Attendance Update</u></p> <p>The DCEO Q&C provided a report which detailed FE attendance by trend over the first quarter of the 2025-26 academic year against the target profile agreed by Governors. Attendance exceeded target for the main vocational programme of study, however, as noted above, English and Maths attendance remained below target. Yet members acknowledged the significant progress compared with last year, which was attributed to the centralisation of Maths and English within departments.</p> <p>The CEO advised that, while positive steps had been made to improve attendance, it was important to recognise that Maths and English GCSE qualifications were not easily accessible and did not suit the majority of the College’s students. It was hoped that this would be resolved through the introduction of ‘stepping stone’ qualifications alluded to in the DfE’s recent Post-16 Education & Skills White Paper (building on the Curriculum and Assessment Review) which stated that the reform would introduce new Level 1 “preparation for GCSE” (stepping-stone) qualifications in English and Maths for learners with lower prior attainment.</p> <p>Q. Does the 4.1% attendance gap between GCSE resit students and non-resit students indicate a positive direction of travel?</p> <p>A. Absolutely. In the work we do to improve attendance, we do not differentiate between the students who need to resit their GCSE exams and those that don’t. We would expect attendance to be at similar levels across the board if Maths and English qualifications were made more accessible to our students.</p> <p>The DCEO Q&C informed members of the new target implemented in 2025-26 to increase the reading age of every 16-19 student. Updates on progress would be reported to the Committee.</p> <p>Q. Are there any areas consistently below expectations or benchmark across a range of KPIs?</p> <p>A. There are some areas that we pay more attention to at certain times; but no, not at present.</p>	
<p>8.</p> <p>8.1</p>	<p><u>Report from the Student’s Union</u></p> <p>A report had been provided by the Student Union President on the Students’ Union and Personal Development Team activity that had taken place for students and future planned activity.</p> <p>The Students’ Union Officers recently organised and delivered a successful campaign focused on raising awareness of student safety.</p>	

	<p>The HE Tea and Talk event brought together circa 30 students from Health and Social Welfare, Social Work and ITT courses and provided opportunities for course feedback and networking.</p> <p>Additionally, collaboration with the University of Bradford Students' Union on planning the annual Reclaim the Night event was ongoing, which aimed to raise awareness on violence against women.</p> <p>Learner Forums (FE) and Programme Committees (HE) had begun to take place for Term 1. Early discussions from the first Learner Forum of the year, held in the Department of Construction, had highlighted several recurring themes that align with issues raised through the Advice Service. These included an insufficient number of laptops available for learners within curriculum areas and ongoing concerns regarding timetable arrangements. The Committee was advised that these issues had been escalated and a response was yet to be received.</p> <p>The DCEO Q&C advised that the wider issue of laptop availability which affected several curriculum areas had been raised with SLT and explored with the IT HoD. This had confirmed that the issue was one of utilisation and scheduling rather than lack of resource. This had been shared with the relevant management teams, who were actively working together to identify solutions and ensure students received the resources they required.</p> <p>The DCEO Q&C advised that a termly meeting would be facilitated for the DCEO Q&C, the DSL, Head of Student Services, the Student Union President and Student Union Officers to ensure dynamic oversight from senior leadership on any issues raised. Members requested that updates be provided to Course Representatives to advise on progress made and requested that a report highlighting the actions taken and an update on the outcome be presented at the next Q&S Committee.</p>	
8.2	<p>ACTION: The VPQT&L to arrange an update on the laptop availability issue at the next Q&S Committee meeting.</p>	VPQT&L
8.3	<p>The Student Governor informed members that some students' access to free meals had been suspended due to delays in their bursary applications being approved. The DCEO Q&C explained that the bursary process required an evidential trail to meet funding requirements, and although students had been supported to apply, delays had occurred where parents had not yet submitted the necessary income evidence. The Team continued to assist students through this process, including running support clinics and working within curriculum areas to ensure students received breakfast before</p>	

	<p>examinations. The DCEO Q&C advised that the rate of processing of bursary applications was faster than previous years and that extensions had been granted to students to provide the required evidence.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that bursary applications and the funding requirements within the bursary process was an operational matter and were assured by the DCEO Q&C that the situation would continue to be monitored through the established complaints process.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Post Induction Student Feedback</u></p>	
9.1	<p>The DCEO Q&C provided an update on Post Induction Student Feedback, advising that in all categories, FE satisfaction rates were equal to or slightly below those achieved in 2024/25 and equal to the external benchmark in all areas.</p> <p>HE students were less satisfied and in response, urgent remedial action was being taken to address areas for improvement and departments' performance would be closely monitored through quality review activities. Significant work was being undertaken to address areas identified for improvement, including students' perceptions of safety and wellbeing in relation to First Aid and Fire Evacuation.</p> <p>The CEO advised that although 95% of students reported feeling safe within the College, further work was required to improve students' sense of safety in the surrounding area, which aligned with the Student Reclaim the Night initiative. The College was actively lobbying local MPs and the Mayor of West Yorkshire for additional action under the 'Safer Streets' agenda and was still awaiting the allocation of a Safer Schools Police Officer to support this important work.</p>	
10.	<p><u>External Examiner Verification Reports</u></p>	
10.1	<p>The DCEO Q&C provided an analysis of the External Examiner (EE) Verification reports for the 2024-25 academic year. In general, most programme teams had ongoing 'good' to 'very good' working relationships with their EEs and were in regular communication with them. This was reflected in the many compliments EEs made to them via their reports, and also this year, in the notable lack of serious issues and concerns compared to previous years. This followed on from previous years, and was driven by the HE Quality Team encouraging programme teams to build strong relationships with their EEs from the start of their appointment and throughout the</p>	

<p>10.2</p> <p>10.3</p>	<p>duration of their EE’s tenure. Validated programmes were performing well overall when compared with other HEIs.</p> <p>The Vice Chair requested that in future, a summary section be added to the start of the report, to capture at a glance which standards had been signed off by the Chief Examiner.</p> <p>ACTION: The DCEO Q&C to arrange a section to clarify standards sign off by the Chief Examiner.</p> <p>Members commended the very positive feedback results and requested their thanks be passed on to all involved.</p>	<p>DCEO Q&C</p>
<p>11.</p> <p>11.1</p> <p>11.2</p> <p>11.3</p> <p>11.4</p>	<p><u>11.1 FE Self-assessment & Quality Improvement Plan</u></p> <p>Two governors had been involved in the validation process for the FE self-assessment and it was noted that the process had been robust, the document had been well written and the data presented had been debated and closely scrutinised by members.</p> <p>The FE self-assessment proposed an overall effectiveness judgement of ‘Outstanding’.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: That the FE Self-assessment 2024-25 & FE Quality Improvement Plan 2025-26 is recommended to Corporation for approval.</p> <p><u>11.2 HE Self-assessment & Quality Improvement Plan</u></p> <p>The HE self-assessment proposed an overall judgement of ‘Silver’, with ‘Silver’ for Student Experience and ‘Silver’ for Student Outcomes.</p> <p>Members scrutinised the key judgements at length. It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ratings, on the whole, were precise at ‘Silver’, but it was suggested that some of the sub grades were somewhat cautious. • The inclusion of the TEF benchmarking within the report would afford clearer understanding. • The criteria for Gold, Silver and Bronze needed articulating better and it was hoped the new TEF framework would bring clarification on this. • It was noted that the current benchmarking criteria lacked clarity; outcomes varied depending on whether comparisons were made against national benchmarks or subjective judgements of other colleges. This made benchmarking 	

	<p>challenging; raising the question of whether the exercise should be purely internal or aligned with wider sector benchmarks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 'Bronze' rating for learning resources was considered fair. However, it was noted that Student Voice responses at times lacked contextual clarity and it was suggested that student expectations could be better managed by outlining resource provision and course offer gains upfront. • Reporting should be contextualised in terms of student demographics; additional narrative should be added to the commentary to provide further insight and clarity to ratings, particularly if split metrics are underpinning ratings. • Quality of provision was not in question; rather complexities relating to student demographics were present, which added to the challenges around assessment gradings. SO5 and SO6 were difficult to evidence due to not being as data driven. • SO2 - The Q&S Committee do not receive a report on outcomes of student success, in terms of distinctions and merits, therefore the success stories are not reported into Corporation. <p>11.5 ACTION: The DCEO Q&C to consider reintroducing Student Success reporting to the Q&S Committee.</p> <p>11.6 Members agreed that the assessment be recommended to Corporation but that it was to be highlighted that the bronze, silver, and gold ratings formed a continuum and that a significant upward movement had been achieved, indicating a positive trajectory.</p> <p>11.7 RECOMMENDATION: That the HE Self-assessment 2024-25 & HE Quality Improvement Plan 2025-26 is recommended to the Corporation for approval.</p>	DCEO Q&C
FE, HE, Apps, Adult Programmes		
<p>12.</p> <p>12.1</p> <p>12.2</p>	<p><u>Student Destinations & Progression</u></p> <p>The report detailed FE progression between the 24/25 and 25/26 academic years. Members were asked to consider progression data and to note that sustained destinations would be reported in Spring 2026, following the completion of a data capture exercise. The DCEO Q&C advised that progression between levels was a clear focus for the forthcoming year.</p> <p>Q. Is the 50.6% reported for progression from Level E/1 to Level 2 an interim figure?</p> <p>A. Some students progress to courses at the same level, others move to alternative institutions. It can also be a challenge to ascertain the destinations of some students, despite considerable endeavours to make contact with them. This is an ongoing process.</p>	

13.	<u>OfS Assurance</u>	
13.1	<p>The report provided an overview of College compliance relating to current Office for Students’ requirements. It confirmed submission of information to the regulatory body in line with the published timetable of activity.</p> <p>The report also provided an update of current proposed changes to the quality assurance processes, including the Teaching Excellence Framework, and gave confidence that the College remained compliant with OfS data returns and participation in key sector submissions.</p> <p>The DCEO Q&C assured members that work was ongoing to ensure that the systems were understood, embedded and practiced. A robust and dedicated team was in place to support the quality processes within HE and the new system would be monitored closely to ensure appropriate assurance continued to be provided.</p>	
14.	<u>The Character of the College</u>	
14.1	<p>The report characterised the College’s offer for 2025/26 by learner volume and demographic interactions. It was recognised as crucial in enabling Governors and the college’s Senior Leadership Team to make decisions about the curriculum offer and to explore opportunities and risks as it sets priorities for the years ahead.</p> <p>The dataset demonstrated that under-representation continued to exist by gender and ethnicity across different subject sector areas. It highlighted areas of curriculum which had particularly high levels of students from disadvantaged backgrounds or with learning disabilities. As a result, it supported the College in ensuring resources for student support were appropriately allocated.</p> <p>The Chair noted that this was a helpful report and proposed that this be presented to Corporation for information.</p>	
Policies		
15.	<u>15.1 HE Admissions Policy</u>	
15.1	There had been no significant changes made to the HE Admissions Policy as part of an annual review.	
15.2	RESOLVED: The HE Admissions Policy was approved.	

15.3	The Chair advised that the FE Admissions policy would now sit at SLT approval level and no longer required approval at Committee level.	
Governance & Risk		
16.	<u>Risk Monitoring</u>	
16.1	The Committee reviewed the strategic risks for which it has oversight and no suggested changes were made.	
17.	<u>Academic Board Minutes – 17 September 2025*</u>	
17.1	<p>The Academic Board minutes for 17 September 2025 were provided for information.</p> <p>Members requested that the Chair highlighted to Corporation that the ABDO/Ophthalmics team had achieved outstanding national recognition. Being ranked first nationally for teaching and learning, second for academic support, second for student support, and being the only FE provider to achieve these top positions.</p>	
Any Other Business		
18.	<u>Items for report to the Corporation</u>	
18.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of meeting - 27 November 2025 • SEND Annual Report 2024-25 • FE Self- assessment & Quality Improvement Plan • HE Self- assessment & Quality Improvement Plan • The Character of the College 	
19.	<u>Any other business</u>	
19.1	Members that had attended the graduation ceremony commended it as a joyful occasion that clearly demonstrated the College's positive impact on families, noting that being the first in a family to progress through higher education can influence future generations.	
19.2	The Committee were advised that a lecturer in Education Studies had recently been awarded a doctorate; members asked that their congratulations be passed on.	
19.3	Members requested that a letter be circulated to all staff, on behalf of the Governing Body, to convey their gratitude, which should acknowledge the level of hard work and thank them for their contributions to the positive outcomes that were being achieved. It was agreed that this recognition should also be reflected in the Chair's address at the Winter Staff Conference. It was agreed that	

19.4	the GD and the Corporation Chair would draft a letter which would be presented at Corporation for approval. ACTION: The GD and Chair to draft a letter of thanks from the Governing Body to all staff to be presented to the Corporation for approval.	GD/Chair
19.5	The Chair advised that, at the CSIG meeting on 24 November, the post-project review of the School of Art Relocation had been presented; this had subsequently been circulated to the Committee. Members noted the hard work done and commended all those involved in the successful delivery of the project.	
19.6	There was no other business.	
19.7	The Chair closed the meeting at 18:12.	
20.	<u>Meeting evaluation form</u>	DGD
20.1	To be circulated by the Deputy Governance Director.	

Approved by the Committee:

.....**F.Thompson**.....
Signed by the Chair

.....**12.03.2026**.....
Date

Agreed actions

No	Minute	Action	Who?
1	8.2	The VPQT&L to arrange an update on the laptop availability issue at the next Q&S Committee meeting.	VPQT&L
2	10.2	The DCEO Q&C to arrange a section to clarify standards sign off by the Chief Examiner.	DCEO Q&C
3	11.5	The DCEO Q&C to consider reintroducing Student Success reporting to the Q&S Committee.	DCEO Q&C
4	19.4	The GD and Chair to draft a letter of thanks from the Governing Body to all staff to be presented to the Corporation for approval.	GD/Chair
5	20.1	Meeting Evaluation to be circulated by the Deputy Governance Director	DGD