

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HE PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 17TH MARCH 2025

Present

Angela Briggs	Governor
Ruth Brook	Governor (Chair)
Lizzie Brown	Student Governor (via Teams)
Dan Fell	Governor
Sam Hewson	Student Governor
Helen Kirby-Hawkins	Governor (via Teams)
John Rees	Governor (CEO)

The quorum for the meeting was 40% of membership to include at least 3 Independent Governors. The meeting was quorate.

In attendance

Sharon Harmon	Clerk to the Corporation
Danny Fenwick	Deputy Principal
Dan Bown	Assistant Principal HE
James Wadsworth	Director of HE Academic Registry

The meeting was held in the Boardroom at North Lindsey College and via Teams and started at 5.30 pm.

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1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Emma Kirk (Staff Governor) and Hamidreza Jafarnejad (HE Curriculum Lead, IoT).

2 Declarations of Interest

Members should declare any personal or financial obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect decisions in relation to the subjects under discussion.

D Fell declared his role as Chair of the South Yorkshire Apprenticeship Hub. It was agreed this declaration did not present a conflict of interest in relation to the items under discussion and decisions sought at the meeting.

3 Minutes of the meeting of the HE Performance & Quality Committee held on 25 November 2024 and any matters arising

The minutes the meeting of the HE Performance & Quality Committee held on 25 November 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Matter Arising

Item 4 - Members discussed options for student presentations to the committee and agreed a 30-minute presentation covering the recent student visit to Westminster to be presented at the start of the next committee meeting on Monday 30th June 2025.

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Action: The Assistant Principal HE and the Clerk to co-ordinate a student presentation for the HEPQ committee meeting on 30th June 2025.

4 HE Performance Report

The Assistant Principal HE (APHE) presented a Higher Education (HE) performance update report, outlining performance across HE provision covering recruitment and retention, attendance, students at academic risk and Office for Students (OfS) compliance.

Members noted that retention across HE remains strong and has maintained a positive trajectory since the last report to the committee. Members examined areas where retention is lower. Members asked about the lower retention rate on some apprenticeships and the potential reason for this. The APHE explained that in some cases the learners were completing the qualification and withdrawing before the completion of the apprenticeship. The APHE further explained that the employer withdrawal of students from programmes impacted retention and set out planned strategies to work with employers and learners to improve completion rates.

Member were further assured that a broader initiative is currently underway to evaluate and enhance pre-entry and transition programmes across HE. This initiative aims to improve student preparedness for HE studies and strengthen relationships between students and programme teams prior to commencement. Members noted that the development and implementation of these initiatives are being strategically planned through the curriculum and budgetary planning processes. Members agreed that this focused approach to pre-entry preparation, alongside robust recruitment and transition strategies, will be instrumental in sustaining and further improving retention.

Members noted and discussed attendance across curriculum areas and across both across campuses. Members noted that attendance remains consistent with previous reports. Members asked about the measures in place to follow up on curriculum areas with lower attendance. Members were assured that attendance and engagement meetings are conducted monthly with each School's leadership team to analyse trends, identify challenges, and develop targeted interventions aimed at improving attendance and, ultimately, retention. Members were assured by the tailored interventions and strategic measures focused on mitigating attendance barriers, particularly within low-performing areas, to foster sustained improvements in student engagement and retention.

Members considered the update on students at academic risk. Members ask for further clarity on how students at academic risk are identified. The APHE explained the factors for identifying and monitoring learners at academic risk and outlined the process to support and reengage at risk students. Members noted it was an ongoing process and agreed the importance of identifying and supporting at risk students early. Members noted that the overall proportion of students at academic risk remains relatively low. Members were assured that each School is actively engaging in targeted support strategies to address high-risk students' needs. Members asked for further detail on monitoring and support strategies and were assured that deep-dive analyses are being conducted within any programme areas which require additional focus and intervention to identify underlying issues and implement appropriate interventions. Members were further assured that the outcomes of these investigations will inform future student support frameworks and risk mitigation strategies.

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	<p>Members had a full discussion of curriculum vision, strategy and development. The APHE outlined the activities of the HE away day and plans for further strengthening of HE provision and curriculum development. Members considered curriculum development opportunities and discussed the implementation and impact of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement. Members considered and discussed external factors such as the devolution of the Mayoral Combined Authority and any potential impact on the delivery of local skills needs.</p> <p>Members agreed they were assured by the ongoing strengthening of internal quality assurance processes that are being considered through the Student Experience and Curriculum Impact (SECI) mechanism which consolidates performance and quality assurances processes.</p> <p>Members thanked the APHE for the comprehensive report.</p>	
5	<p>HE Quality Improvement Plan</p> <p>The Director HE Academic Registry presented a report providing an overview of the Higher Education Quality Improvement Plan (HEQIP) for the current academic year (2024-2025). Members noted the contents of the report, and the progress made towards achieving the actions set out within the HEQIP.</p> <p>Members noted the HE QiP 2024-2025 contains 10 rolling actions which, either, emerged from the 2023/2024 Self-Evaluation Document (SED) or from issues identified in-year by the HE leadership teams. Members discussed the current actions set which address a range of themes, including student achievement and outcomes; student voice activity; teaching, learning and assessment (TLA), student access and participation, and satisfaction with learning resources and IT equipment.</p> <p>Members reviewed and considered progress against HEQIP targets. Members noted the good progress made and were assured that the majority of actions are on track for completion by the end of the academic. Members were assured by plans in place to address any actions currently behind schedule.</p> <p>Members sought further clarity on the level of risk associated with the 'BRAG' rating. The Director HE Academic Registry explained the rating in more detail.</p> <p>Members noted and discussed the improvement in completion rate for the HE student induction survey and were assured by planned actions targeted at further improving student engagement with surveys.</p> <p>Members sought assurance on DNCG's preparedness for compliance with the new OfS condition of registration in relation to harassment and sexual misconduct. The Director HE Academic Registry outlined the work being conducted across the Group to ensure compliance. Members were assured by actions being taken to ensure compliance before the August 2025 implementation date.</p> <p>Members were assured that the HEQiP does not currently identified any significant risks to DNCG's ability to deliver high quality HE provision or the capability of DNCG to meet the OfS ongoing conditions of registration.</p> <p>Members thanked the Director HE Academic Registry for the thorough update report.</p>	

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6	<p>OfS Oversight Tracker</p> <p>The Director HE Academic Registry presented the Office for Students (OfS) oversight tracker. Members noted and discussed updates on compliance with OfS conditions of registrations. Members were assured there are no areas of risk of non-compliance.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Note: The DP left the meeting.</p>	
7	<p>HE Student Experience Report</p> <p>The Assistant Principal HE presented the HE students experience report. Members noted and discussed the contents of the report.</p> <p>Members considered how student feedback is collected through a range of formal and informal mechanisms, at different levels across HE. Members discussed the response rate and feedback received through student surveys. Members noted the earlier discussion on student response to surveys and the strategies in place to continue to improve student engagement in feedback.</p> <p>Members asked about the mechanism for responding to student feedback and comments. The Director HE Academic Registry explained that the newly established HE Governance Structure which centres the student experience, integrating feedback into reporting mechanisms, strategic planning and quality assessment.</p> <p>Members discussed educational gains noting these are a key element of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and embedded across all schools within HE. Members noted that across HE at DNCG, a range of educational gains were deployed during the 2023-24 academic year to promote the overall student experience and offer opportunities for students to engage with activity outside of the formal curriculum. Members noted that committees for Quality, Standards, and Enhancement and Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship review outcomes to continuously enhance academic and personal development opportunities. Members noted the Scholarly Internship Programme for 2024-25.</p> <p>Members were pleased to note that two students were selected to represent DNCG to present their research to policymakers and MPs in Westminster. This was part of a University of Warwick led initiative to showcase the research of undergraduates and to celebrate British undergraduate research in general. Both DNCG students received special recognition for their research. Members agreed this is a significant achievement for these students, and DNCG as a college-based higher education provider and this achievement should be celebrated. Members further agreed these student successes demonstrate the strength of the student experience at DNCG.</p> <p>Members agreed the student experience within HE is a key strength of the institution, as evidenced by the breadth of educational achievements and the consistently positive feedback provided by students through both formal and informal channels. Members were assured that for the 2024-25 academic year, the enhancement of the student experience remains a top priority.</p>	

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8	<p>IoT Performance Report</p> <p>Members received and reviewed the IoT Performance report providing an update on the performance, infrastructure developments, and strategic initiatives within the Lincolnshire and South Yorkshire Institutes of Technology (LloT & SYloT).</p> <p>Members noted that recruitment remains strong and above target for both LloT and SYloT. Members noted that staff shortages remain a challenge in some specialist technical disciplines but were assured that new hires, CPD-driven training pathways, and micro-credential expansion aim to mitigate these risks and strengthen student progression. Members discussed routes shortages in some specialist technical disciplines and were assured by implemented targeted marketing and employer engagement strategies. Members had a full discussion of strategies and approach to programmes.</p> <p>Members noted and discussed key infrastructure investments including the successful UK Food Valley bid, supporting the development of a new Food Science degree and enhancing laboratory spaces at UCNL. Members were further assured that new CPD courses in automation, renewable energies, and employer-led upskilling initiatives have strengthened loT's workforce impact, ensuring technical education remains industry-aligned.</p> <p>Members were pleased to note that DNCG continues to play a leading role in WorldSkills and international collaborations, with Team Japan's 2024 gold medal success in Lyon directly linked to training provided at DNCG facilities. Members were advised that plans are in place to expand local and national student skills competitions to further engage learners and enhance employability outcomes.</p> <p>Members agreed that with continued investment in digital transformation, employer engagement, and flexible learning models, loT remains a key driver of regional and national workforce development.</p>	
9	<p>Governance Development Plan</p> <p>Members reviewed the Governance Development Plan and considered the updates on progress against targets for which the committee has oversight relating to curriculum and growth. Members agreed all targets remain appropriate and were assured that progress against targets was on track.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Note: Sam Hewson (Student Governor) left the meeting.</p>	
10	<p>Risk Register Review</p> <p>Members received and reviewed the Group Risk Register. Members reviewed and discussed the strategic risk for which the HEPQ Committee has responsibility for oversight in relation to Higher Education provision. Members noted updates to mitigations, planned actions and assurances. Members considered the residual risk score and noted this has not changed since the last meeting of the committee and that it remains within the target risk score. Members were satisfied the current risk rating was appropriate.</p>	
11	<p>Committee Chair's Report to Corporation Board</p> <p>Members considered the business of the meeting and noted key items and any changes to strategic risks identified for feedback in the Committee Chair's Report to the Corporation Board. Members agreed to highlight:</p>	

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- Assured by the robustness of reports received by the committee.
- Full discussion on curriculum vision and development.
- Assurance received on compliance with OfS conditions of registration and preparedness for compliance for new conditions.
- Assurance received that a fully integrated quality system is in place.
- Feedback on students visit to Westminster.

12 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

13 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HE Performance & Quality Committee is scheduled for Monday 30th June 2025, 5.30 pm at UCNL.

The meeting closed at 7.35 pm

Sharon Harmon
Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: **(Chair)** **Date:**

TABLE OF ACTIONS				
Date	Minute	Action	Responsibility	Date Due
17/03/25	Item 3	The Assistant Principal HE and the Clerk to co-ordinate a student presentation for the HEPQ committee meeting on 30 th June 2025	Assistant Principal HE / Clerk	June 2025