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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2025

Present

Helena Nyanzu	Governor
Segun Odumoye	Governor
Philippa Poland	Governor
Lee Walker	Governor (Chair)

The quorum for the meeting was at least 3 external members. The meeting was quorate throughout.

In attendance

Peter Grant	Governor (Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee)
Sharon Harmon	Clerk to the Corporation
Terry Hutchinson	Director of Student Information Services
Rachel Maguire	Chief Operating Officer, People & Information
Barrie Shipley	Chief Operating Officer, Finance & Infrastructure
Anastasia Mullen	RSM
Ryan Falls	Cooper Parry

The meeting was held at on MS Teams and commenced and commenced 5.30 pm.

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1	Apologies	
	Apologies for absence were received from Preetha Kumar, Governor.	
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.	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
3	Student Information Services Reports	
	Records Management & Archiving	
	The Director of Student Information Services presented a report outlining strategic solutions for the digital transformation of records management and archiving processes. Members agreed that the proposed plan was effective in mitigating compliance risks, enhancing data security, and improving administrative efficiency across the entire Group. Members discussed the process for the migration of paper records and were assured of a robust project plan in place, including mitigations and allocation of required resources. Members noted the project timeline and key activities and agreed an update to be presented to the March meeting of Audit and Risk committee.	

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Members noted and discussed the implementation of a new retention policy for document management, including digital archiving and automated processes for archiving student and staff information.

Data Compliance Monitoring

The Director of Student Information Services presented an update report on the progress of data compliance monitoring visits. Members noted that one further visit has been completed since the last report to the committee in June 2025. Members reviewed the visit report covering Access to HE (DC) and were assured by a significant reduction in error rates down to 0%. Members discussed the actions taken and the reasons for the positive reduction. Members discussed the criteria for deciding sample size. Members noted the initial schedule for data compliance visits during 2025-2026.

PDSAT Report 2024-25

The Director of Student Information Services explained that the Provider Data Self-Assessment Toolkit (PDSAT) is a computer application commissioned by the DfE and provided to audit firms and education providers in the FE Sector in England. It interrogates Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data and produces reports on this data, which can then be used by providers to identify and correct potential anomalies in the data. Members were assured that across both colleges, the software application is run and checked monthly, commencing annually after the ILR R04 return, which is submitted in December, and running through to the final ILR R14 submitted in October of the following year. Members noted and discussed the key findings of the final dataset for the academic year 2024/2025. Members were assured that the group will continue to run the software, check the reports, resolve queries and collate responses to prepare and check data for the 2025/2026 academic year.

Delayed Withdrawals 2024-25

The Director of Student Information Services present the delayed withdrawals update report. Members were assured that there has been a very significant reduction in the funding clawback values in the last two academic years. Members noted that staff in Student Information Services (SIS) have been rigorously reviewing all enrolments crossing into future academic years, liaising with the relevant curriculum areas, for the purposes of keeping the volume of data issues contained within report FRM27 as low as possible. Members were assured that a comprehensive action plan to address any ongoing issues with delayed withdrawals has been implemented.

Members thanked the Director of Student Information Services for the comprehensive update reports.

***Note:** The Chief Operating Officer, People & Information and the Director of Student Information Services left the meeting.*

4 Minutes of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on 1st October 2025 and any matters arising

The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee held on 1st October 2025 were agreed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

There were no matters arising.

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5 Regulatory Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2024/25

The Audit and Risk Committee received and considered the Regulatory Self-Assessment Questionnaire (RSAQ) completed for DN Colleges Group for 2024/25. Members noted the regularity self-assessment questionnaire (RSAQ) is designed by the DfE to provide clarity of the accountability framework, key requirements and the type of evidence to provide and it supports corporations in drafting their statement of regularity, propriety and compliance. Members were advised that Corporations must provide a copy of their completed RSAQ to the reporting accountant, signed by the accounting officer and the Chair of the Corporation Board. Members noted that the RSAQ is reviewed by our external auditors, Cooper Perry in line with their reporting accountant’s responsibilities for reporting on regularity, whereby they will look to obtain limited assurance and to report to the Corporation and to the DfE in accordance with the requirements of the College Accounts direction 2024/25.

Members noted that the draft RSAQ was presented at the 1 October 2025 committee meeting. Members noted minor updates highlighted in the RSAQ since it was last reviewed by the Committee. Members considered and were assured by the contents of the final Regulatory Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2024/25.

Resolution: The Audit & Risk Committee approved the Regulatory Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2024/25 for presentation to the Corporation Board at the meeting on 10th December 2025.

6 Draft Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25

The Audit and Risk Committee received and considered the Audit and Risk Committee’s Annual Report 2024/25. Members were advised that the Audit & Risk Committee’s Annual Report is a requirement of the College Accounts Direction 2024-25 and the College Financial Handbook and is designed to assist the Chief Executive Officer and the Board with their respective responsibilities for the College’s systems, controls, and risk management, which underpin the strategic objectives.

Members noted that the draft Audit and Risk Committee’s Annual Report 2024/25 was previously presented and reviewed at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 1st October 2025. Members noted minor updates to the report since it was last reviewed by the Committee. Members agreed the report provided an accurate summary of the work undertaken by the committee during the year. Members agreed with the view on the committee’s effectiveness and how it has fulfilled its remit. Members agreed the opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Corporation’s assurance arrangements, framework of governance, risk management and control processes for the effective and efficient use of resources, solvency, and the safeguarding of assets was correct.

Resolution: The Audit and Risk Committee approved the Audit and Risk Committee’s Annual Report 2024/25 to be presented to Corporation Board on 10th December 2025.

7 Financial Statements and Regularity Assurance Report

The Committee received and considered the DNCG Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2025. Members were assured that the Group has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and has demonstrated this in the detailed financial plan to July

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2027. Members noted for this reason, it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Members noted a range of performance indicators are used to monitor the financial performance of the College which are reported to the Corporation throughout the year. Members were assured that the Group has performed well financially, with income exceeding budget. Members noted that this, combined with underspends against staff pay costs and other operating expenditure has resulted in a financial surplus exceeding planned budget. Members noted and discussed adjustments for land disposal and impairment. Members were assured that the Group has continued to invest in capital expenditure to improve the condition of its estate and student equipment and facilities. Members were assured that the Group has achieved a financial health grade rating of 'Outstanding' and met all banking covenants.

Members considered the statement of corporate governance and internal control set out in the financial statements and agreed there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Group's significant risks that has been in place for the period ending 31 July 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. Members were assured that this process is regularly reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee and by the Corporation

Members were assured that the accounts of the two trading subsidiaries, Kingsway Consulting Ltd and Optime Support Ltd, have been fully audited. There are no audit recommendations and no irregularities. The accounts and Letters of Representation were approved by the subsidiaries Boards at their respective Annual General Meetings on the 26 November 2025. The COOFI reported that there are two small profits generated within these subsidiaries and any profits are gift aided back to DNCG under a deed of covenant. The COOFI explained that Doncaster College and North Lindsay College subsidiaries are not trading therefore dormant accounts.

The External Auditors presented the Audit Report for the year ended 31 July 2025. The Auditors provided an overview of the scope of their audit work. Members considered and discussed the findings of Audit Report and reviewed the draft letter of representation. Members were assured that it is proposed that the auditors will issue an unqualified audit opinion on all entities in the Group. Members noted the external audit work will be concluded once the final year end confirmation statements of funding from the DfE are received in early December 2025.

Resolution: The Audit and Risk Committee endorsed the recommendation for approval of the DNCG Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2025 and the signing of the letter of representation to the Corporation Board subject to the receipt of the final year end confirmation statements of funding from DfE.

Note: P Grant, the Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee left the meeting.

8 Anti-Fraud, Money Laundering, Bribery and Corruption Policy

Members received and considered the updated Anti-Fraud, Money Laundering, Bribery and Corruption Policy. Members were assured that following the introduction of new legislation that came into effect from the 1 September 2025 and updated guidance that was published by the Department for Education on the 17th of September 2025, a thorough review and update of the Anti-fraud, Money Laundering, Bribery and Corruption Policy has been undertaken

Members reviewed and considered updates to Money Laundering, Bribery and Corruption Policy. Members were assured, that in addition to updates to the policy,

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	<p>risk assessments are being undertaken to identify areas of vulnerability, such as procurement, payroll, student funding and sub-contracting arrangements and alongside a review of the controls. Members noted that the findings of these reviews will be presented at the next Committee meeting. Members were further assured that all staff will undertake appropriate training, and all new contracts will contain clauses to protect the College where appropriate and as far as is possible.</p> <p>Members agreed the updated Anti-fraud, Money Laundering, Bribery and Corruption Policy was robust and appropriate.</p> <p>Resolution: The Audit and Risk Committee approved the Anti-fraud, Money Laundering, Bribery and Corruption Policy.</p>	
9	Internal Audit Reports	
	<p>The Internal Auditor presented the Internal Audit Progress Report for November 2025. Members noted updates on progress against the internal audit plan for 2025/26 and were assured by progress and reporting to date.</p> <p>Members received and considered the audit findings report for the Learner Journey Further Education audit completed in June 2025. Members noted that the audit finding report provided a reasonable level of assurance and there were no high-level management actions.</p> <p>Members received and considered the audit findings report for the Internal Audit Continuous Assurance Visit 1 completed in November 2025. Members noted that Internal Audit test a suite of key controls which are considered key risk areas that management require assurance throughout the year for functionality and effectiveness. Members noted that testing of the controls resulted in two low priority management actions. Members were assured that the resulting actions had been added to the audit tracker for completion. Members were assured by the audit findings report and the effectiveness of controls and processes.</p>	
10	Committee Chair's Report to Corporation Board	
	<p>Members considered the business of the meeting and recorded key items and any changes to strategic risks identified for feedback to the Corporation Board in the Committee Chair's Report. The following items were highlighted for inclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A&R Committee endorsement of DNCG Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2025. Assurance received on unqualified external audit opinion on all entities in the Group. 	
11	Confidential Item	
	<p>The Internal and External Auditors left the meeting for this item.</p> <p>The minutes of this item is deemed to be CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of Instrument 14(4) and 16(2) as they contain business sensitive information. These minutes are <u>not</u> available for public circulation and are held separately by the Clerk to the Corporation.</p>	
12	Any Other Business	
	<p>There were no items of any other business.</p>	

13 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee is scheduled for Monday 10th March 2025, 5.00 pm on MS Teams.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Sharon Harmon
Clerk to the Corporation

Signed: (Chair)

Date:

TABLE OF ACTIONS				
Date	Minute	Action	Responsibility	Due Date