

Minutes of: Academic Quality and Standards (FE) Committee

Date: 3pm 12th November 2024 **Location:** A5, College Road Campus

Present	In attendance
Mervyn Jones (Chair) Abigail Appleton (Principal & CE) Ian Axtell Myfanwy Page (Staff Governor)	Xaviere Hughes (Vice Principal FE) Abigail Boyce (Clerk to Governors)
Quoracy: Meeting was quorate	

1. **Quorum** – The meeting was duly convened as a quorum of three members was present, satisfying the quorum requirement set out in Section 5, Clause 2.2 of the Standing Orders (*Academic Quality and Standards Terms of Reference*).
2. **Apologies for Absence** – Jennette Arnold and Justin Gregory (Vice Principal HE)
3. **Declarations of interest** – no new declarations
4. **Minutes of last FE AQ&S Meeting**
 - a. **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 18th June 2024** – minutes approved
 - b. **Matters Arising** – discussed professional development cycle and ongoing training for Governors.
5. **FE Performance data** – The Vice Principal FE presented this report highlighting key areas.
 - a. **Key data year to date (attendance and retention)**
The Vice Principal for Further Education (VPFE) reported no major changes, aside from a slight increase in students studying Maths, English, and Creative Media and Technology. It was noted that GCSE results were down across the county, while Higher Education applications had risen. The VPFE also mentioned the appointment of Mary Seaborn as the new EHCP Manager and highlighted an increase in students with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs). Committee members inquired about the profile of students with EHCPs and emphasised the need for this data to be understood and presented to the Board.
 - b. **Destination data 2024 including internal progression**
The destination data was reviewed and it showed that of 484 enrolled students 375 were progressing to further education (including internally). There has been an increase in enrolment onto our HE courses from internal FE students from 2020. Efforts are underway to involve students in HCA's Higher Education (HE) programs, including direct applications for HCA students. A survey will be conducted for students who recently left,

asking about their next steps, such as university, gap years, volunteering, or employment, to gather valuable data for supporting FE students.

A Committee Member highlighted how adult learning and entitlements will be revisited by the government in 2026. The Committee inquired about HCA communications and the VPFE explained a process for managing inquiries was being addressed. It was explained how there have been instances where enquiries were not logged, but this is being rectified with a new page on the HCA website.

c. English and Maths report

This was addressed by the VPFE during the review of item 4a above. No significant changes were noted, as detailed earlier.

6. FE Quality Reports – The Vice Principal FE presented this report, highlighting key areas.

a. Progress on Quality Development Plan –

The VPFE highlighted the key actions, which were to include moving relevant points from the SARs to the Quality and Development Plan. The Committee suggested reviewing how industry and work experiences impacts on students. The final SARs and a robust development plan will be presented to the Board. The employment engagement piece is key, and more systematic work is needed. The Committee discussed how for the pop-up shop, the focus should be on pushing learning opportunities further and engaging retail managers.

b. First Impressions Survey 2024

The survey results were presented with explanation that individual student concerns are followed up. It was explained that the survey responses are not anonymous, which allows for tracking of student progress over time at HCA. The next survey, scheduled for the Christmas period, will also include teacher participation.

7. Curriculum and Portfolio Development

The VPFE provided an update to the Committee on discussions with colleagues regarding the UAL fashion retail course at Levels 2 and 3. The Committee considered how this course could be integrated into HCA and the potential benefits of establishing stronger connections with the West Midlands region.

8. Key Risks

The Principal confirmed that no new risks had been identified. The curriculum will undergo a review, and the impact of increased National Insurance contributions will be considered.

9. Any other business

No further business was discussed.

Minutes of: Academic Quality and Standards FE&HE combined Committees

Date: 12th November 2024 **Location:** College Road Campus, A5

Present	In attendance
Mervyn Jones (<i>Committee Chair</i>) Abigail Appleton (<i>Principal/CE</i>) Myfanwy Page (<i>Staff Governor</i>) Charlotte Semus (<i>Student Governor</i>) Russel Roberts (<i>Online</i>) Helen Hurford Kate Seekings Ellie Bunston Ian Axtell	David Hawkins (<i>Vice Principal BDSE</i>) Abigail Boyce (<i>Clerk to Governors</i>) Xaviere Hughes (<i>Vice Principal FE</i>) Daniel Pryde-Jarman (<i>sitting in for Vice Principal HE</i>)
Quoracy: Meeting was quorate in accordance with paragraph 1 below.	Absent: Justin Gregory (Vice Principal HE), Jennette Arnold, Kate Mori, and Jo Horton

- Quorum** – The meeting was duly convened as a quorum of three members were present, satisfying the quorum requirement set out in Part B: Section 5, Clause 2.2 of the Standing Orders (*Academic Quality and Standards Committee Terms of Reference*).
- Apologies**
 - Apologies for absence** – Justin Gregory (Vice Principal HE), Jennette Arnold, Kate Mori, and Jo Horton
 - Declarations of interest** – none
- Minutes of last meeting**
 - Approval of minutes of last meeting held on 18th June 2024** – minutes approved as a true and accurate record
 - Matters arising** – none
- Change of Committee Name (for approval)** – The committee discussed changing the name to "Curriculum and Quality," as it better reflects its scope. It was noted that this had been previously discussed at the Search & Governance committee. The committee agreed to the change, provided there was no overlap with the Academic Board. All members supported this change.

Action: Clerk to review the Terms of Reference regarding cross over with Academic Board.

5. DfE Curriculum and Assessment Review

The Principal provided a verbal update on the government's Curriculum and Assessment Review commissioned from an independent panel. It was noted that it is taking a more holistic

approach to the national curriculum, with an emphasis on diversity, positivity, and a possible shift away from an exam-focused approach. The discussion highlighted the importance of creativity and inclusivity, celebrating neurodiversity and disabled individuals, and recognising different abilities as valuable attributes. The Principal informed Governors that they could submit feedback individually if they wish.

6. Access and Participation Plan

The Principal provided a verbal update, noting that a full briefing had been submitted to the board. It was highlighted that the Office for Students had raised only two queries, which were purely factual and this was seen as a positive outcome.

7. Policies and Strategies

The Committee discussed the need for a strategy to guide policy development. A Committee member suggested streamlining the process by aligning the review of similar policies to occur at the same time. This approach would help ensure that the policies are considered as part of a cohesive, unified discussion.

8. Annual Reports 2023/24

- a. Equality and Diversity** - The Committee reviewed the figures in the EDI Reports and discussed the shift from referring to "equality" to "equity," agreeing that this new terminology should be reflected. A Committee Member asked whether an EDI charter exists and if one could be found through the AoC. The Committee also discussed how categories are defined in the self-assessment forms, including whether disabilities are sufficiently detailed. It was highlighted that engaging with students is essential to better understand the implications and support needed. The language around disability and the self-assessment process will be reviewed, and it was discussed to rename the framework as "Equity and Diversity."
- b. Freedom of Speech** - The Principal noted a minor update from the government and highlighted HCA's own policy in place.
- c. Student Complaints** – The Principal outlined the Office for Students process and explained the college's process for tracking complaints. They noted the introduction of an additional step between informal and formal complaints to help prevent issues from escalating. A Committee Member suggested amending the terminology from "complaint" to "concern" to better reflect this distinction, with the aim of resolving concerns earlier. Another Committee Member inquired about statistics on how many issues are resolved at this stage. The Principal explained that the college has a set timeframe for addressing complaints and provides guidance to support this process.
- d. CMA** - The Principal emphasised the importance of adhering to CMA regulations, particularly concerning the new website. It was noted that policies need to be robust and durable for students. The Committee discussed whether a Force Majeure clause might be necessary to mitigate risks in negotiations with students. It was agreed that the Student Complaints Policy should explicitly state its compliance with CMA regulations, and other policies should align with this approach.

ACTION: Principal to check policies to ensure alliance with CMA.

9. Close of Business and Date of Next Meeting

With no further business to discuss, the Chair adjourned the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 25th March 2025, at 3:00 PM.

Minutes approved: Date:

Minutes of: Academic Quality and Standards (HE) Committee

Date: 5:30pm 12th November 2024 **Location:** A5, College Road

Present	In attendance
Mervyn Jones (<i>Chair</i>) Abigail Appleton (<i>Principal & CE</i>) Helen Hurford (<i>Student Governor</i>) Charlotte Semus (<i>Student Governor</i>) Kate Mori (<i>Online</i>) Russell Roberts (<i>Online</i>) Ellie Bunston Ian Axtell Kate Seekings	David Hawkins (<i>Vice Principal BDSE</i>) Abigail Boyce (<i>Clerk to Governors</i>) Xaviere Hughes (<i>Vice Principal FE</i>) Daniel Pryde-Jarman (<i>sitting in for Vice Principal HE</i>)
Quoracy: Meeting was quorate in accordance with paragraph 1 below.	Absent: Jennette Arnold and Justin Gregory (<i>Vice Principal HE</i>)

1. **Quorum** – The meeting was duly convened as a quorum of three members was present, satisfying the quorum requirement set out in Part B: Section 5, Clause 2.2 of the Standing Orders (*Academic Quality and Standards Terms of Reference*).
2. **Apologies for Absence** – Jennette Arnold and Justin Gregory (*Vice Principal HE*)
3. **Declarations of interest** – no new declarations
4. **Minutes of last FE AQ&S Meeting**
 - a. **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 18th June 2024** – minutes approved
 - b. **Matters Arising** – none.
5. **HE Performance data** – Daniel Pryde-Jarman presented this report, on behalf of the Vice Principal HE, highlighting key areas.
 - a. **Key data year to date (attendance and retention)**

It was reported that positive changes are underway, including a review of how open days are conducted, with plans to incorporate portfolio reviews and highlight the new recruitment process. It was noted that academic staff are now more involved in recruitment, which the college values, though attention must be given to managing staff workload. Application numbers are expected to start becoming available by early February.
 - b. **Graduate outcomes**

It was noted that graduate outcomes were similar to the previous year, with the data reflecting a cohort that studied during the COVID-19 period. The survey, completed by students, was explained, and it was acknowledged that a deeper understanding of the data is needed. The Committee discussed the options available to students and

recognised that not all coding fully represents the broader context. Questions were raised about how the data could be used more effectively.

6. HE Quality Reports – Daniel Pryde-Jarman presented this report, on behalf of the Vice Principal HE, highlighting key areas.

- a. **Minutes of Academic Board** – The Committee noted the minutes from the Academic Board held on 25th October 2024.
- b. **Progress on Quality Improvement Plan** - The Committee explored ways to enhance services and considered the possibility of revisiting this with an external consultant. The importance of cross-course and cross-college collaboration was highlighted during the discussion. The Committee also emphasised the significance of the Student Union, recognising its vital role in fostering a sense of community in a smaller city and bringing students together across different courses.
- c. **Student Settling in Survey 2024** – The Committee was informed that the results were not yet available and would be presented at a later date.
- d. **NSS results and action plan 2024** – An overview of the results was provided, highlighting that they were positive for the college.

7. Curriculum and Portfolio Development: MA Forged Metal Design

The Committee was provided with an overview of the new course. It was noted that the aim is to launch the degree in 2025, pending the Board's notification. A Committee member asked whether Board approval was required for new courses, and the Clerk was tasked with verifying this. The Committee discussed the importance of the strong relationship with Holme Lacey and emphasised the need to distinguish this course from others. It was explained that the course would resemble a research-focused master's programme. A Committee member inquired about the market demand, and the Principal confirmed significant interest from students.

The Committee expressed its support for the introduction of the new course.

ACTION: The Clerk to review the Standing Orders and Instrument & Articles to determine if Board approval is required.

8. Key Risks

The Principal highlighted several potential risks, including a discussion on the fees for the new course, the challenge of turning around recruitment, and the introduction of the new admissions process in 2025.

9. Close of Business and Date of Next Meeting

With no further business to discuss, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:24 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 25th March 2025, at 3:00 PM.

Minutes approved: Date: