

Minutes of: Curriculum and Quality (Combined) Committee

Date: 4pm on 11th November 2025 **Location:** A5, College Road Campus

Present	In attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ian Axtell (<i>Chair</i>) ▪ Abigail Appleton (<i>Principal & CE</i>) ▪ Myfanwy Page (<i>Staff Governor</i>) (<i>joined at item 5</i>) ▪ Russell Roberts (<i>Online</i>) ▪ Kate Seekings (<i>Online</i>) (<i>left at item 4</i>) ▪ Jennette Arnold (<i>Online</i>) <p>Collectively referred to as the “<i>Committee</i>” and individually as a “<i>Committee Member</i>”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Justin Gregory (<i>Vice Principal of Higher Education, “Vice Principal (HE)”</i>) ▪ Xaviere Hughes (<i>Vice Principal of Further Education, “Vice Principal (FE)”</i>) ▪ Abigail Boyce (<i>Clerk to the Corporation, “Clerk”</i>) ▪ Christy Bolderson (<i>Audit Committee Member</i>)
<p>Quoracy: Meeting was quorate in accordance with paragraph 1 below.</p>	<p>Absent: Ellie Bunston and Helen Hurford.</p>

Note: *In these minutes, Committee Members’ contributions that have a tangible impact, such as influencing a decision, prompting a change, or raising a valid challenge, are italicised and/or underlined. Routine questions and comments are recorded in the discussion but are not highlighted, to focus attention on contributions that directly affect College decisions or actions.*

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 and Declarations

- a. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies were received from Ellie Bunston and Helen Hurford.
- b. **Attendance Note:** Christy Bolderson, newly appointed to the Board and serving on the Audit Committee, was in attendance to observe the meeting and develop her understanding of how other committees operate. She did not participate in the discussions.
- c. **Declarations of interest:** there were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of last meeting

- a. **Approval of minutes of meeting held on 22nd September 2025:** The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record, subject to an amendment to the wording of Jennette Arnold’s and Kate Seekings’ apologies. It was noted that they had requested that the minutes be revised so they do not record them as absent, as they had made an attempt to join the meeting. The Clerk will amend the minutes accordingly.
- b. **Matters Arising:** all actions were noted as complete or as in progress.

4. Strategy and KPIs: KPIs and Objectives for Committee

The Principal presented an overview of the Committee’s key performance indicators (KPIs) and objectives, drawing attention to the inclusion of budget, growth, and high-level recruitment targets. Progression data for Higher and Further Education was reviewed, using the 2025 leavers as a baseline, and the Committee discussed mechanisms for tracking student progression,

including the use of follow-up surveys. Members also considered the standardisation of KPI reporting across committees, noting that updates would be tailored as required and any areas of overlap clearly identified. Attendance and improvement were recorded as a combined target; however, it was confirmed that these would be reported separately in the December Board report.

5. Update: Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper

The Principal presented an overview of the Government's Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper, which sets out significant reforms intended to simplify the post-16 qualification landscape and strengthen technical and higher-technical pathways. Key themes include the streamlining of vocational qualifications alongside A-levels, improved clarity for learners and parents, and a stronger alignment between provision and labour-market needs. The White Paper also places emphasis on progression, outcomes, and flexible learning, including an enhanced focus on short courses and lifelong learning opportunities for adults. Proposed changes to higher education funding and quality measures were noted, although detailed requirements remain subject to consultation. The Committee discussed the potential implications for the College's curriculum and future planning, recognising that much will depend on the outcome of forthcoming consultations. Further updates will be provided as the policy develops.

6. Annual Reports

The Committee received the following reports, and a summary of the discussions concerning each is provided below:

a. Equality and Diversity

The Principal presented the revised report, which now incorporates defined benchmarks and in-year improvement targets, reflecting the Committee's previous feedback. The Principal also provided updates on initiatives to diversify the range of visiting speakers and outlined the continued challenges associated with low completion rates of the EDI profile. Further work is planned to enhance the robustness of EDI reporting. The Vice Principal for Higher Education explained that data privacy is ensured through the use of anonymised, aggregated information, which necessarily limits the level of detail but provides appropriate safeguards.

b. Access and Participation Plan Annual Report

The Principal presented the annual Access and Participation Plan (APP) report, providing an update on progress and current risk areas. Members discussed the ongoing student consultation, noting that fewer students have been engaged than desired and that improvements are needed in how the APP is communicated and made accessible. The committee highlighted the importance of practical actions resulting from student feedback and of presenting the content in a way that is clear and engaging. Creative approaches, such as visual summaries, were discussed. Members emphasised the need for a change in student engagement to ensure the APP is meaningful and effectively informs policy and practice.

c. Safeguarding & Prevent Annual Report

The Vice Principal of Further Education presented the Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report, noting the complexities of the issues and inviting questions from the Committee. Governors expressed satisfaction with the report and the high-level oversight provided by the safeguarding group and student guidance processes. Changes to data

categorisation were explained, including the reduction in categories and the controlled assignment of themes by senior staff.

A Committee Member challenged the use of “low mood” figures and the potential risk of pathologising students. The Vice Principals provided reassurance that staff exercise professional judgement and prioritise students’ wellbeing, ensuring indicators are used appropriately. They also highlighted the careful balance required in tracking both significant and minor events to provide early support while maintaining an appropriate safeguarding approach.

d. CMA Compliance Procedure and Monitoring report

The Principal presented the CMA Compliance Procedure and Monitoring Report, highlighting measures to ensure that all students, including those less confident, can raise complaints without any impact on their academic results. The committee noted the importance of accurate use of terminology regarding university status in accordance with OfS guidance.

e. Student Complaints Report

The Vice Principal of Higher Education reported a rise in complaints compared with the previous year, predominantly relating to student support and the provision of reasonable adjustments. Measures have been implemented to address communication gaps and ensure consistency across course teams, including the reinstatement of study skills support and management of assessment extensions. The committee agreed that the report would be amended and resubmitted.

f. Freedom of Speech Report

The Principal presented the Freedom of Speech report, emphasising the importance of ensuring that free expression is supported while complying with legal requirements and prohibiting hate speech. It was noted that the Freedom of Speech policy requires updating, including references to relevant legislation, and that the revised policy will be presented at a future committee. The report highlighted initiatives to encourage respectful debate on topical issues and noted the importance of proactive promotion of freedom of speech within the college. Members discussed challenges in engagement, including low student attendance at some events, and the need to explore further ways to facilitate participation.

All reports were noted by the Committee.

7. Safeguarding Policies: Updated for Review

The Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Child-on-Child Abuse Policy were reviewed following the Board’s request for amendments. The Committee noted that the policies had been clarified and key points addressed. One additional minor amendment will be shared via email by a Committee Member. These policies will be submitted to the Board for ratification at the December meeting.

8. Policies and Strategies

a. **FE Behaviour Policy**

The FE Behaviour Policy, which complements the Support and Challenge and Discipline policies, was reviewed. The Committee noted that separating FE and HE policies allows for more appropriate application to different student groups and enables staff to make timely decisions regarding warnings and disciplinary matters. The policy was approved.

b. **Admissions Policy**

The Vice Principal of Higher Education provided a verbal update on the Admissions Policy, noting that it will be separated into distinct policy and process documents. Minor amendments have been made to the policy. The Committee considered whether it should review the policy following such changes and agreed that a summary of minor amendments would suffice. It was also noted that non-material changes will be clearly defined to determine which updates require Committee consideration.

c. **Higher Education Attendance Policy**

The Vice Principal of Higher Education presented the rationale for a clearly defined attendance policy, noting the need for a firm framework while accommodating individual student circumstances. The Committee raised whether the policy should explicitly reference safeguarding. The Vice Principal noted that safeguarding primarily relates to students under 18 and vulnerable adults, and is therefore not strictly applicable to Higher Education; however, it was acknowledged as an important consideration, and the Vice Principal will consider whether and how it could be incorporated into the policy. The policy will be revised and submitted to the Committee for future consideration.

9. **Key Risks**

The Committee noted the potential implications of the **Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper** as a key risk, recognising that the proposals could significantly impact curriculum, funding, and strategic planning. Members agreed to continue monitoring developments and to assess and address any emerging risks as further guidance is issued.

10. **Any other Business**

The Chair thanked the Clerk for the improved cover sheet, noting that it had made the running of the meeting more efficient and had helped to focus and direct discussion.

11. **Close of Business and Date of Next Meeting**

With no further business to discuss, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 17:35. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 02nd December at 4:30 PM to consider the Further Education Self-Assessment Review and University of Wales Trinity Saint David Annual Programme Review.

Minutes approved: Date: