

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Education Committee meeting held on 3 March 2025 on MS Teams commencing at 4.00 pm

Present: Dr P Graham (Chair), Ms J Hemphill, Mr M Higgins, Mr A Hoey, Mr G McAllister, Mr B Patterson, Mr S Shevlin, Mr D Small

In Attendance: Mrs C Brown, Mr C Fairless, Ms H Hampsey, Mr S Lavery, Mr S McCartney, Ms M Oliver, Ms P Steele

Secretary: Mrs K Wallace

It was agreed to take item 71.7 at this point in the meeting.

71.7 Creative Learning – Curriculum Innovation through Digital Skills

PG welcomed MO who was in attendance to update Committee on the development and implementation of AI in the College. Members heard information on exploration and implementation of AI which had taken place for both staff and students, and innovation and implementation with TeacherMatic, LearnWise and JISC.

MH advised that a bid had been submitted to DfE by the sector, to support development of these programmes. Anticipated efficiencies which could result would then be used as continuous investment for development and new enhancements.

Members responded enthusiastically to the work being carried out.

Action: The presentation provided would be revised to include information on related risk, and proposed management of same, before being provided to the GB meeting on 26 March for information.

PG stressed the importance of this issue being interwoven into the College's strategic plan.

MH outlined events on this topic and noted a proposal for the FE Principals' to develop a sectoral strategy, following a masterclass event on AI which would take place on 16 April.

Members welcomed the information and debate on risk appetite and the sectoral approach to AI was endorsed.

Committee thanked MO for an excellent presentation. She left the meeting at 6.27pm.

71.1 Apologies

Mr Macauley and Dr Monteith.

71.2 Declarations of Interest

PG again reminded members that his wife is Chief Inspector of ETI.

In relation to item 71.10, BP declared his work with Nexus who also provide counselling and training facilities.

71.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2024 were approved.

Proposed: DS Seconded: SS

71.4 Matters Arising

Additional training/CPD opportunities for teachers: Members noted information on sessions provided by the College during 2024/25 through CPD and the Multiply scheme, and planned development of same for 2025/26.

71.5 Chair's Communication/Correspondence

QIP Submission: The 2024/25 QIP return and template QIP 2024/27, were noted. Further information would be provided as a separate agenda item

WAPP Submission: CB outlined the purpose and parameters of the Widening Access and Participation (WAPP) commitment. The WAPP template 2025/26 and submission notes were noted.

Entrepreneurship Education: PG updated members on his participation in developing entrepreneurship in the childcare section of the College, with 2 business case applications having been submitted to DfE by the project lead, Joanne McCourt.

PG referred to a ballot of UCU members on action short of strike, which would open on 10 March. SL advised that this risk was being formally addressed through discussion at A&R and inclusion on the corporate risk register.

MH reported attempts by employers to re-engage on pay negotiations and plans to meet with TUs in coming days.

71.6 VP Teaching & Learning Summary Report

CB spoke to her report and highlighted information on a number of key topics including: mid-year performance and enrolment activity; the electrical installation programme; work through the Multiply scheme and DfE integration funding; traineeship; and good news stories.

Members heard that Joanne McCourt would be invited to the May meeting of Committee and noted information on the purpose of the new OU/FE Strategic Partnership Group.

71.8 Community Engagement

CF referred to the discussion paper provided before directing members to the summary presentation supplied. He outlined the current activity taking place and questions to be considered in relation to same.

CB referred to the data table to explain the College's decision on community and non-regulated enrolments and members considered the options for moving forward.

PG noted the need for discussion around strategic elements of the report, while MH detailed the context in which the College had made decisions previously and options currently available to the College.

During discussion members expressed a range of ideas around use of outcentres, benefits of community taster sessions, community preferences and needs, and alignment with Ministerial priorities. MH would table the College's position compared to the sector at the Accountability Meeting on 3 April, with the intention to reconsider opportunities for growth through community and/or non-regulated enrolments.

PS noted the opportunities available to support community groups and enhance the College's reputation in the community, along with the inherent challenges.

PG welcomed the very timely report and noted that community curriculum would be included in the annual curriculum activity to be brought to Committee on 14 May. GB would be notified of the direction of travel at their May meeting, with the final report to be presented to the GB meeting on 25 June.

Action: Members agreed to start the process of increasing community enrolments.

CB emphasised the need to target programmes based on market intelligence and available statistics.

DS concurred with the above comments and agreed the reporting process as outlined.

PG thanked CF and PS for the information presented and recognised the need to work on timelines. He offered his help in any way that could be useful.

CF and PS left the meeting at 5.38pm.

71.9 QIP Mid-Year Report

HH presented the QIP 24/25 and confirmed confidence in the data provided. She highlighted promotion of innovation and integration in the report along with strengthening of sustainability and green skills, which is being promoted through Mark Walker.

Members noted that further reviews would take place at end of March and end of June.

Action: Target dates for each of the actions will be included in future updates.

71.10 Safeguarding Mid-Year Report

SMC took members through his report and answered a number of questions in relation to type and number of incidences recorded.

Committee also noted that Women's Aid had been invited to give a talk to students on the subject of coercive control.

PG expressed concern at the type of problems being experienced by students and commended SMC and the safeguarding team for the work being carried out.

SS and DS left the meeting at 5.45pm.

71.11 Student Experience Report

AH gave a verbal update on the work of the Student Union over the last term and thanked the Student Services Manager and the College Wide Facilities Manager for ongoing work to address concerns identified through student feedback.

Students' appreciation for the recommencement of the Winter Warmer Scheme was noted and AH thanked the campus catering teams for their work to provide this. He also reported the importance to students of upcoming provision by the College, of a series of events on mental health issues.

Work carried out by AH on raising the profile of the Student Union and highlighting the importance of the student voice was commended by the Chair and members.

71.12 Any Other Business None.

71.13 Date of next meeting 14 May 2025.

The meeting closed at 6.00pm.

Dr P Graham, Chair



Date 21.05.25

Mrs K Wallace, Secretary

