

Heart of Yorkshire Education Group Corporation ('Corporation')

Board of Governors ('Group Board')

Curriculum and Quality Committee ('Committee')

Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 November 2024 ('Meeting')

Present: David Powell ('Chair'); Dmitry Fedotov; Ruth Baxter; Alex Miles; Vijay Teeluck (Online); Annabelle James (Online); and Louise Elkington.

In attendance: Lorraine Cross, Group Executive Director of External Relations and Development ('EDER&D'); Lisa Macdonald, Group Executive Director of Curriculum and Quality Standards ('EDCQS'); Andrea Quantrill, Director of Quality and High Performance ('DQ&HP'); Steve Mulligan, Head of HE ('HoHE'); Ben Porter, Head of English and Maths ('HoEM'); Steve Harrison, Local College Director for Castleford College (CD); and Sam Cremore, Head of Governance and Legal Services ('GP').

Apologies: None.

1. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair 2024/25

The Committee discussed the appointment of a Chair and Vice Chair for 2024/25. It was agreed that David would serve as Chair and Dmitry as Vice Chair for the 2024/25 academic year.

2. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, which he confirmed had been called in accordance with the Instrument and Articles and was quorate. He noted that no apologies had been received.

3. Declarations of Interest

The Chair requested declarations of interest. None were reported.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 June 2024

4.1. The minutes were reviewed for accuracy. A minor amendment was requested.

4.2. IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 June 2024 be approved subject to the amendment referred to in Minute 4.1.

5. Matters Arising

5.1. Updates were provided by the GP on items from the previous meeting:

5.1.1. MA 2 – Serious behaviour issues breakdown: This would be addressed under Item 10 (Student Experience Update).

5.1.2. MA 3 – Attendance data: This would be addressed under Item 11 (Maths and English Update).

5.1.3. MA 4 – Apprenticeship achievement rates: This would be addressed under Item 18.

5.1.4. MA 5 – Learning walk schedule: This would be addressed under Item 15 (Governor Learning Walk Dates).

5.1.5. The GP noted the update regarding the status of Quality Standard in Carer Support (QSCS) accreditation at MA 1 would be rolled over to the next meeting.

6. Dates and Arrangements for Meetings

6.1. The Committee confirmed the schedule for the 2024/25 academic year. In-person meetings were planned for the start and end of the year, with others conducted online. Consensus favoured an in-person format for the validation event later in the month.

6.2. The GP agreed to circulate proposed agendas for the upcoming meetings.

7. Chair's Update

The Chair highlighted key updates from a recent AOC Chairs' Curriculum and Quality meeting, including a focus on SEND provision and upcoming changes to the Ofsted inspection framework. The Chair agreed to share his notes with the SEND Lead Governor.

8. Results, Key Achievements, and Headlines

- 8.1. The EDCQS presented highlights of the year, noting improvements in retention and achievements, especially in apprenticeships and SEND provision. 16-18 retention remained steady while High Needs had dipped which was being addressed.
- 8.2. There had been staffing issues at the start of the year, though these had since been addressed. Maths and English results had been impacted by grade boundary shifts, although Maths saw a slight improvement over the previous year.
- 8.3. Forecast grades had continued to be accurate.
- 8.4. Members asked the following questions:
 - 8.4.1. Q: What caused the dip in Castleford's 16-18 retention rates?
A: Specific challenges in engineering and motor vehicle programmes were cited relating to test marking, with corrective measures in place.
 - 8.4.2. Q: How will the Group prevent these test marking issues from recurring?
A: A more rigorous induction process had been put in place along with internal checks.

9. QIP Sign-off 2023/24 and Items to Roll Over

- 9.1. The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2023/24 was reviewed, highlighting resolved items and those needing continuation.
- 9.2. Members asked the following questions:
 - 9.2.1. Q: Why have amber rated items, yet to be resolved, been removed from the 2024/25 document?
A: The EDCQS explained these were no longer significant and other means of monitoring were in place. Members suggested the inclusion of matters arising for these items.

9.2.2. Q: Why are engineering and motor vehicle still flagged?

A: Despite progress, sustained attention is needed due to lingering staff and programme challenges.

9.3. It was agreed that future QIP reports will include a clear rationale for decisions on retaining, removing, or closing items.

9.4. IT WAS RESOLVED TO approve the QIP sign-off and the items to be rolled over.

10.i. Student Experience Annual Report and ii. Student Experience Update

10.1. The reports were taken together. The CD pointed out an increase in mental health

and behaviour issues, a rise in young adult carers and support strategies put in place for high-risk students.

10.2. The CD and Dmitry discussed a collaboration between the College and the Youth Association relating to high-risk students.

10.3. Members asked the following questions:

10.3.1. Q: How many students use the Navigate system, and what does the 9% increase signify?

A: A 9% increase in student confidence using the system was reported. The CD agreed to confirm what percentage of students were confident and how this compared to the previous year.

10.3.2. Q: Why have BR1 and BR4 meetings increased significantly?

A: The CD referred to a growth in student enrolment, more challenging student behaviour issues since enrolment and improved staff training. The CD noted that staff were being encouraged to deal with behaviour issues informally, where possible.

11. Maths and English Update

11.1. The HoEM highlighted improvements in staffing stability, attendance, and new delivery models.

11.2. Q: How has staff absenteeism been addressed?

A: The HoEM noted that by filling vacancies and improving team management and support, absenteeism had reduced significantly.

11.3. Q: How have initial challenges with class sizes and resources been resolved?

A: The HoEM explained that better planning led to balanced class sizes, averaging 21 students, with no classes exceeding 30 learners. Classes started on schedule.

11.4. Q: Has the department restructuring improved learner outcomes?

A: The HoEM noted Functional Skills classes were used to build foundational confidence and skills, especially for students with lower starting points and progression to GCSE levels was carefully monitored.

12. Quality Assurance Plan for 2024/25

12.1. The plan was presented, emphasising a refined focus on achieving consistent teaching and learning standards.

12.2. The DQ&HP agreed to send deep dives to the GP to circulate.

12.3. IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the Quality Assurance Plan be approved.

13. Quality Improvement of Teaching and Learning Assessment Policy

13.1. Governors made some suggestions for improvements to the policy.

13.2. IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the policy be approved subject to such amendments as the DQ&HP may choose to integrate.

14. Governor Learning Walk Dates and Area Selection

14.1. Governors selected focus areas, prioritising engineering and SEND provision for 2024/25.

14.2. Governors asked the following question:

14.2.1. Q: Will learning walks include follow-ups on previous findings?

A: It was confirmed they would, with an emphasis on measuring progress and impact.

15. HE Report 2023/24

15.1. The HoHE pointed out:

15.1.1. Achievement rates were consistent against the previous year but lower in Wakefield than Selby and Castleford.

- 15.1.2. Key feedback from the National Student Survey, with library resources and timeliness of feedback as recurring issues.
- 15.1.3. Mental health remained a challenge and was a key reason for withdrawals. Governors carefully reviewed the mental health support offer to ensure it was suitable. It was determined that it was.
- 15.2. Governors asked the following questions:
 - 15.2.1. Q: Why are results lower in Wakefield?
A: The HoHE noted Wakefield courses tended to be longer, and the students often faced personal challenges others did not.
 - 15.2.2. Q: How is feedback timeliness being addressed?
 - 15.2.3. A: The HoHE explained that policies ensure a three-week turnaround, with communication improvements underway.

16. HE Access and Participation Plan

- 16.1. The plan was recommended for Board approval after noting its robust measures for underrepresented groups.
- 16.2. Q: How will the plan address minor male participation gaps?
A: The HoHE noted targeted outreach. Members discussed the importance of flexible study. The Chair agreed to put the HoHE in touch with a contact at Huddersfield University.
- 16.3. IT WAS RESOLVED TO recommend the HE Access and Participation plan to the Board.

17. Apprenticeships Report

- 17.1. The EDER&D pointed out progress in apprenticeship achievements, with plans to enhance employer engagement, that achievement had slightly declined against the previous year but was still above national benchmarks, that the Apprenticeship Accountability Framework was on track and that destinations were positive especially for those who had completed their learning.
 - 17.1.1. Q: What are the main causes of withdrawal?
A: The EDER&D cited a change of employer, loss of job and mental health issues. She agreed to incorporate this into the next iteration of the report.
 - 17.1.2. Q: Why had Construction achievement dipped?


A: This was put down to legacy withdrawals and delays to EPAs.

18. Validation Session Arrangements

Preparations for the November validation session were reviewed, with final logistics confirmed.

19. Review of Effectiveness of Meeting and Identification of Emerging Risks

The Committee reflected on the Meeting's effectiveness and highlighted emerging risks, including recruitment challenges and sectoral changes in funding models. The comments received were positive.

Signed  Date 25 February 2025

Actions

No.	Minute	Details	Deadline	Responsibility
1	6.2	The GP agreed to circulate proposed agendas for the upcoming meetings.	ASAP	GP
2	7	The Chair agreed to share his notes regarding the AOC Chairs' Curriculum and Quality meeting with the SEND Lead Governor.	ASAP	The Chair
3	9.4	It was agreed that future QIP reports will include a clear rationale for decisions on retaining, removing, or closing items.	The next iteration of the report	EDCQS
4	10.2	The CD and Dmitry discussed a collaboration between the College and the Youth Association relating to high-risk students.	The next meeting	CD
5	10.3.1	The CD agreed to confirm what percentage of students were confident and how	The next meeting	CD

No.	Minute	Details	Deadline	Responsibility
		this compared to the previous year.		
6	12.2	The DQ&HP agreed to send deep dives to the GP to circulate.	ASAP	DQ&HP
7	16.2	The Chair agreed to put the HoHE in touch with a contact at Huddersfield University.	ASAP	The Chair
8	17.5.2	The EDER&D agreed to incorporate the reasons for withdrawal into the next iteration of the report.	ASAP	EDER&D