

IEG CURRICULUM & QUALITY COMMITTEE

17th June 2025

4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Boardroom, Peterborough College

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT

Nicholas Crippa	(online) (joined at Item 3)
Pamela Jane Kilbey	Chair
Rachel Nicholls	(online)
Tony Warner	
Vincent Brittain	
Kris Varslavs da Silva	

IN ATTENDANCE

Julia Bates	
David O'Garr	
Sarah Young	(online)
Matt Shough	
Debbie Barker	
James Whybrow	
Trisha Franklin	
Jane Spurgin	(Governance Director)

ABSENT

Jonathan Teesdale
Marley Sheridan
Steve Saffhill

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- a. **Apologies for absence:** Apologies had been received from Jonathan Teesdale, Steve Saffhill and Marley Sheridan.
- b. **Confirmation of eligibility and declarations of interest:** No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate, and no new interests were declared.
- c. **Requests for urgent business:** None received

2. MINUTES

- a. **Minutes of the last meeting:** The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th March 2025 were approved as accurate **(ACTION 1)**
- b. **Matters arising from the minutes:** None
- c. **Actions from the minutes:** Completed actions were noted. Action 5 – full report from Purlos on Destinations is expected at the end of June so the results will be reported at the next meeting.

3. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE

The Committee received a full report providing updates on KPIs for Education & Training and Apprenticeships, covering attendance, retention, achievement, satisfaction, and progression.

It was discussed that:

- there is a continued focus on attendance in recognition that it is critical in maximising student outcomes. It was explored that there are differentiated site specific attendance strategies in place to support improved attendance;
- DfE data, shows that since the pandemic persistent absence has risen and schools are struggling to meet the 90% benchmark. Nationally, absence in 2024/25 is 6.8%, with 18.4% persistently absent, compared to ~11% pre-pandemic. Local reports confirm similar rises in Lincolnshire and CPCA. Children with mental health conditions are particularly at risk (NHS Digital, 2022);
- the Attendance and Disciplinary Policies, supportive intervention strategies (including using personal development sessions and in-year student voice enquiries) are to be reviewed over the Summer ready for September;
- the focus at this point of the academic year is around retention and achievement and the in-year achievement indicators are strong;
- the 16-18 results/GCSE results will come in August;
- the recent student survey results reported that 90% feel that their learning is relevant and 86.3% feel well prepared for assignments and exams;
- the questions for next year's student survey are being reviewed;
- progression (destinations) – students who wish to progress is up by 3.9% and most leavers are going into employment or further training;
- Apprenticeship attendance is at 89.4% - there is a focus on supporting an improvement in English and maths attendance;
- Apprenticeship achievement rates forecast at 62.7%, in line with 2023/24 outturn;

- the DfE Apprenticeship Accountability Framework reports currently a positive position, with all eight indicators RAG rated as Green.

Members **welcomed** the student survey results which look very encouraging, commenting that student feedback is always telling and the statistics are excellent.

The Committee **commented** further that the robust discussion on attendance was worthwhile due to its importance and **looked forward** to hearing further about the intervention strategies being developed for 2025/26 (**ACTION 2**).

4. APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

Members received an update report on Apprenticeships indicating an overall positive momentum with improved retention and strategic planning for growth, while acknowledging and actively addressing challenges related to past withdrawals and sector-specific staffing shortages.

The keys points noted and discussed were that:

- there are 690 active apprentices, with 144 past withdrawals impacting 2024/25 achievement rates;
- new apprentice retention is strong at 94% (up from 83% last year), nearing the 95% target due to enhanced interventions;
- 2024/25 apprenticeship enrolments are on track with revised targets, despite economic and sector-specific challenges (e.g., plumbing, electrical).
- End-Point Assessment (EPA) first-time pass rates are improving and now exceed the 50% internal target at 52%;
- as reported above, performance against the DfE Apprenticeship Accountability Framework is Green (on track) for all eight indicators;
- improved quality interventions, welfare calls, structured employer engagement, and performance ratings for at-risk apprentices are in place.
- ongoing sector-wide staffing challenges, particularly in plumbing and electrical, affect apprentice progress and End-Point Assessment (EPA) availability and limited availability of EPAs in some sectors could potentially hinder timely achievement;
- a new review process, including performance ratings and collaborative monthly reviews, is in place to predict and support apprentice achievement.
- the quality improvement plan is being actively implemented, with a focus on reducing withdrawals and improving outcomes for apprentices with additional learning needs;
- in terms of funding rule changes, the apprenticeship minimum duration will decrease from 12 to 8 months from August 1, 2025, the new Off-the-Job Training Rules are fixed minimum hours per standard which will replace the current calculation method and English & Maths are no longer mandatory for apprentices aged 19+, though funded learning is still available. The impact of the changes to the minimum length of programmes is not known and, although likely attractive to employers (particularly for programmes offered within schools/within and academic year), will require a careful balance between quality versus speed of completion. It is expected that further reforms will be announced before

the end of October which may lead to a careful re-shaping of the apprenticeship offer;

- Robust strategies are in place, including monthly tracking of progress, ongoing monitoring of key performance indicators, regular performance reviews, and a restructured team.
- 2025/26 curriculum planning is complete, forecasting a 24% increase in new apprenticeship starts. Weekly assessment centres have launched, and recruitment for 2025/26 is underway, including 8 new standards (e.g., degree apprenticeships, Low Carbon Heating);

The Committee **welcomed** the report and the improvements achieved, as evidenced by the DfE Accountability Scorecard, and **thanked** the team for their work.

5. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEW (QIP) & QUALITY INITIATIVES

Members received a detailed report on the QIP progress and the quality initiatives in place across the Group. Each section was individually discussed, as follows:

QIP

The QIP continues to be effective, supporting strong performance across key measures. Retention in Education and Training remains consistently high, and targeted actions are sustaining this. Overall, trajectory maintains our commitment to continuous improvement.

The progress report reflects:

- progress against targets throughout the year has improved in all areas and there remains a focus on attendance;
- improved student progress and effective stretch and challenge work set;
- successful work experience placements and improved student monitoring; no "red-rated" areas.
- in terms of Leadership & Management, the Centre for Green Technology has been opened and a new Interim Executive Group Director for People Services appointed, expected to enhance recruitment efficiency;
- a positive impact on developing Skills Bootcamps and strengthening adult learning delivery, following the appointment of the Assistant Principal;
- significant improvement in EHCP curriculum input (92% Peterborough, 85% Stamford);
- attendance (as previously discussed) remains below target;
- holistic review of English and maths undertaken and actions to be implemented.

Members explored the details of the plans to drive improvement in English and maths, noting the wide range of activities planned (i.e. streaming/grouping based on attendance; dealing with reluctance to engage; supporting delivery teams to drive improvements, etc). On asking whether the right resources and staff are in place for next year, members were advised that there has been a considerable growth in staffing in English and maths and much training has been done with

existing staff to improve their confidence. Members discussed the challenge that there is a national shortage in maths teachers.

Quality Initiatives

The report presented highlighted progress in teaching, learning, and quality, with positive trends in lesson effectiveness and student engagement. It also identified ongoing areas of focus that are being addressed through targeted interventions and professional development: attendance, assessment preparation, and ensuring consistent teaching practices. The following details were noted:

- an exceptional number of lesson visits had been completed (888);
- findings included good use of ILT, well-structured lessons and confident skill integration whilst areas for further improvement were identified as questioning techniques and assessment consistency;
- 48 Student Mentor lesson visits have been conducted witnessing well structure lessons and effective behaviour management. Next steps include plans to review and evolve the Personal Development delivery model, ensure students' views are captured during visits and, as with all areas, support collaboration to embed best practice;
- 590 pieces of student work have been reviewed this academic year to assess whether students are being stretched and challenged to make the expected progress over time. It was found that stretch and challenge is highly effective but that SPAG is not always identified and identifying student progress over time required further work;
- 9 holistic reviews have been completed with a further review of apprenticeships being finalised. The impact of the holistic views has been assessed by measuring 2023/24 achievement against expected 2024/25 achievement and in the majority of cases progress has clearly been made supporting the approach as effective (a differentiated approach may be developed for some areas going forward);
- the process will be reviewed against the (new) Ofsted scorecard, inspection framework, and adjusted as required.

The Committee **noted** the detailed reports, particularly the progress against the quality improvement objectives, and **thanked** the teams for their work.

6. STUDENT PROGRESS & PREDICTED FE & APPRENTICESHIP OUTCOMES 2024/25 UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the progress of learners and end-of-year predictions for both Further Education (FE) and Apprenticeships. The following was noted and discussed:

FE Progress:

- progress is formally measured three times per year. Currently, 78% of students are predicted to achieve at or above their minimum achievable grade (MAG). The aim is for more learners to achieve above their target grade than in the previous year;
- predicted achievement: current predictions show a best-case scenario of 87.5% and a worst-case of 86.7%. The 87.5% best-case prediction is 0.7% below last year's achievement;

- the predicted achievement process is designed to maximise achievement through forensic examination of course data by course teams with their Head of Faculty, reviewed with Assistant Principals, promoting accountability;
- daily monitoring is in place, with teams focusing on learners at risk of failing through extra classes, catch-up sessions, and workshops to ensure final modules are completed;
- Heads of Faculty will continue to closely monitor every individual student achievement and teams will focus on learners currently predicted to fail their course, targeting them for additional interventions;
- results will be measured and compared against predicted outcomes, KPI targets, and national averages.

Members explored the difference in predicted achievement between the Peterborough and Stamford campuses, noting that:

- **Student Body Composition:** The student body across the two campuses is quite different, impacting the nature of the learners.
- **Differentiation:** Stamford generally exhibits better attendance compared to Peterborough.
- **Demographics:** Differences in family life versus non-family life among students contribute to the variance.
- **Learner Levels:** Peterborough has a significantly higher proportion of learners on Entry Level and Level 1 courses.
- **Volume:** The increase in learner numbers at Peterborough is substantial, which can affect overall statistics.

Apprenticeships Progress:

- currently, 64% of apprentices are on or above their target. Apprentices are supported by regular reviews and personalised support.
- predicted achievements: the modelling tool predicts 63% achievement rates, which is broadly in line with the previous year.

Discussion moved to the performance of Functional Skills (FS) across the Group, particularly at Peterborough:

- there has been an overall decline of 6.3% in FS achievement compared to the previous year;
- only Entry and Level 1 FS Maths are offered, as the language at Level 2 is considered too difficult, prompting students to take GCSE Maths instead;
- there are far more opportunities for students to take and repeat the Maths FS test;
- similarly, students often progress directly to GCSE Level 2 for English due to the complexity of Level 2 FS English. This creates a difference in pathways;
- it was noted that while Level 2 FS in English may be the best route for some students, some employers may not recognize the equivalence between a Functional Skill and a GCSE;
- the student governor observed that E&M can be overwhelming and potentially discouraging for students, making giving up an easier option. He emphasized the need for fast and hard support to overcome discouragement issues and build resilience;
- the overwhelming majority of students at Stamford take GCSEs rather than FS.

The Committee welcomed the information provided, the detailed discussion, commending the targeted support being provided for learners at risk of non-achievement, and looked forward to receiving the full results after the year end.

7. STUDENT VOICE

A report was presented sharing the updated Student Voice Strategy and End of Year Survey results for information and Committee comment.

Student Voice and Engagement Strategy

The Committee received the updated Student Voice and Engagement Strategy, which outlines how IEG values student feedback. This strategy is built upon the AoC (Association of Colleges) Charter, emphasizing partnership, respect, and empowerment to enhance the overall student experience.

It was noted that:

- the strategy is due for launch in November;
- the Executive team has been actively involved in developing 15 enabling strategies to support its implementation;
- this refreshed and rebranded strategy specifically references the new AoC Student Charter, ensuring alignment with current best practices;
- a key focus within the strategy is to provide clarity around roles and responsibilities for both staff and students, ensuring that student feedback effectively translates into actions that improve the student experience.

Governors inquired about the scope of student support, asking if it primarily addresses issues within or outside the curriculum. The response clarified that the strategy encompasses both areas, aiming to identify and address key themes wherever they emerge. The positive percentages, particularly concerning students feeling safe, were highlighted as encouraging.

On being asked about his personal experience with opportunities to have his voice heard and whether a culture for this exists, the student governor affirmed that pathways for students to be heard do exist, citing several avenues:

- students can directly approach staff members;
- the use of the student hub provides a central point for information and support;
- posters around the campus communicate available support and channels for feedback; and
- there are student surveys.

This positive feedback from a student was noted as particularly reassuring for the governors present.

Student End of Year Survey Results

Members noted that student feedback at IEG continues to be overwhelmingly positive, demonstrating high satisfaction across key areas such as teaching, support, and preparation for future goals. While response rates for the latest

survey were slightly lower than mid-year, the results remain consistent with previous surveys, showing a clear pattern despite fewer students participating.

Key highlights from the feedback included:

- 95% of students feel safe in the college.
- Scores in the 90s were observed across most data points.
- 89% of students feel lessons are challenging, which is a fantastic result and indicates improved value added.

The main area identified for improvement is assessment preparation, which, despite improving to 86%, remains the lowest-rated aspect. This will be addressed through ongoing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for staff, focused lesson visits, and integrated into faculty planning.

Next Steps arising from Student Feedback:

- Heads of Faculty will continue to analyse this data to maintain and increase positive statistics;
- for the next academic year, there will be a deeper dive into the survey methodology to examine all aspects of a program of study, allowing for more detailed data analysis;
- ensure the hundreds of positive student statements are seen by more people. This can be achieved by potentially presenting some of them at staff conference, displaying them on TV screens and feedback posters throughout the campuses, and incorporating them into social media campaigns. This will offer students and potential students a more comprehensive view of what the IEG experience is truly like;
- governors found it reassuring that IEG is continually delving deeper into feedback, even with positive results, demonstrating a commitment to ongoing improvement.

The Committee welcomed the evolving Student Voice and Engagement Strategy, the positive results of the end of year Student Survey and the continued efforts of the team to explore all student voice feedback.

8. STUDENT GOVERNOR'S REPORT 2024/25

The Committee received a report detailing the Student Union's (SU) activities and financial reporting to IEG for the 2024/25 academic year. It noted that a primary focus for the SU was its proactive integration with the IEG Student Engagement Calendar and its alignment with the five pillars of student engagement.

The SU significantly contributed to a vibrant student experience by leading awareness campaigns, organizing events, and spearheading various student-led initiatives. Their efforts were supported by the Welfare and Engagement teams across both campuses. These teams provided crucial guidance, facilitated regular discussions on student welfare and engagement, and ensured strong financial accountability within the SU.

Looking forward, the student governors will review the year's SU activities, identifying what worked well and developing recommendations to strengthen and improve the SU and overall student engagement for the 2025/26 academic year. These findings will be shared with the Student Engagement Leads for their consideration and dissemination to the newly appointed SU Governors for

2025/26. Any unspent budget is to be rolled over into 2025/26 to support student activities.

The Committee expressed its gratitude to the student governors for the insightful contributions made, particularly regarding future strategies for ongoing student involvement. Thanks were given for the thoughtful input, and recognition for the positive legacy and substantial impact made during their tenure.

9. PARTNERSHIPS & SUBCONTRACTING UPDATE

Members received a report detailing IEG's individual partnership performance outlining retention, achievement to date and best-case achievement for apprenticeship provision, and actual delivery to date against contract values for 2024/25.

It was reported that, overall, subcontracted provision is performing well, with strong retention and achievement rates across partners, consistent with last year's performance. All delivery remains within agreed contract values, and robust quality oversight is in place. While some in-year adjustments have been made to predicted volumes (particularly for adult ESOL), potential risks for 2025-26 are being monitored, especially concerning future funding for school-based apprenticeships.

Funding for adult learning has been cut by both CPCA and ESFA. Demand exceeds the funding available. The cut affects our subcontract partners Aspire and GLADCA. The simplest option would have been to stop funding these contracts. However, after careful review it was considered that their work is vitally important for local communities. Because of this we have chosen to continue with a smaller contract. This means some students will have to be turned away in 2025/26.

The Supported Delivery Model continues to perform strongly, with 1,282 enrolments and improved quality oversight.

Governors expressed their thanks for the report, noting the contract performance for 2024/25 and noting the concerns that the reduced adult skills funding will have on future partnership contracts.

10. SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) TIMETABLE 2025/26

Members were advised that the IEG Self-Assessment Report (SAR) format, process and timeline for 2025/2026 remain largely unchanged from the previous year, but with updated dates.

Key Points:

- faculties and partners will submit individual SARs and Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) by September 2025. These will be informed by team performance reviews, reflections, KPI data, feedback, and External Verifier reports;

- Heads of Faculty and Assistant Heads of Faculty are responsible for completing their respective SARs. Assistant Principals for Quality will review these submissions before moderation in the autumn term;
- the Senior Management Team will then produce the Group SAR, with key staff leading specific sections;
- the final Group SAR and QIPs will undergo formal moderation by Governors and external reviewers, with submission to the Board in December 2025;
- the QIPs will directly drive improvement activities throughout the 2025/26 academic year.

The Committee approved the IEG Self-Assessment Timeline and the SAR and QIP templates for implementation (**ACTION 3**).

11. ARRANGEMENTS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT WEEK & STAFF CONFERENCE JULY

Members were pleased to receive the details of the arrangements for the July Staff Conference and the draft programme for staff development week. It discussed the staff conference arrangements which has been evolved following feedback from last year's event and includes staff awards which are so important.

The Committee welcomed the focus on staff, their development and celebrating their success.

12. DEFERRED ITEM: NARTS REPORT 2023/24

It was noted that the NARTs Report 2023/24 will be presented to the next meeting of the Board on 3rd July 2025.

13. 2025/26 CURRICULUM PLANNING UPDATE, INTERNAL PROGRESSION AND APPLICATIONS

A report was provided to the committee providing an overview of curriculum planning and initiatives for the 2025/26 academic year, including significant recruitment targets and strategic responses to funding changes. It noted the following key points:

Student Recruitment Targets

- the Group has set ambitious student recruitment targets that exceed the ESFA budgeted allocation. This is subject to sufficient budgetary headroom and approval by the Finance & Resources Committee;
- the curriculum plan anticipates 5,786 16-18 year old students, which is 239 students over the ESFA allocation. The financial implications of this, particularly if in-year growth does not materialize, will be considered by the Finance & Resources Committee;
- total overall applications are 8,031, up 17% from last year across all age groups;
- new student applications are strong, with 3,949 received. Of these, 3,580 have been accepted or are in the offer stage, and over 60% have confirmed

IEG as their first choice. A taster event is planned for the end of the month to aid conversion;

- internal progression is promising, with 64% of the current cohort intending to return, marking a 3% increase from 2024/25;
- a target of onboarding 301 new apprentices has been set;
- UCP Higher Education Programmes expect to enrol 453 FTE students.

New Curriculum Offerings

The curriculum is being enhanced with several key initiatives:

- redesign of Level 1 and Entry Level pathways to boost retention and progression;
- introduction of new Level 2 Technical Occupational Qualifications (TOQs) for direct entry into employment;
- reintroduction of Level 3 General Applied Qualifications, due to defunding being delayed until 2027;
- strengthened Access pathways, particularly for Health Professions;
- review of blended and online learning models, including for accountancy programs;
- the CGT allows for additional qualifications in green technology to be introduced for both full time and part time learners. The new curriculum offer includes drone technology, thermography, hybrid boilers and air and ground source heat pumps, electric charging systems and battery regeneration and storage.

Adult Education Budget (AEB) Impact

A significant concern is the approximately 14% decrease in adult funding for IEG, directly impacting planned adult enrolments for 2025/26:

- a cross-the-board reduction in allocation has been applied to maintain the breadth of offer;
- progressing adult learners have been prioritized for full-time study programmes;
- this reduction necessitates difficult decisions regarding 19+ full-time applications, as limited places will impact student choice, staffing, and subcontracted provision. Capacity will be reviewed after 16-18 recruitment is finalized in September.

T Levels

T Levels are experiencing phenomenal growth, with applications doubling this year, marking a real success. This growth, however, presents **significant challenges for securing work placements**. Employers' ability to meet demand is a constant concern, particularly in areas like engineering, construction, business, health & social care, early years, science, and animal care. Failure to achieve the required placement hours (315 hours) would result in students failing the qualification, presenting a monitored risk and tension.

IEG is committed to finding these placements, recognizing that this is future model. Comprehensive information is provided to parents and students to ensure full understanding of the T Level demands and the collaboration required. Teams are actively working to structure the work placement hours into appropriate student opportunities. IEG closely monitors this national challenge, with regular updates on flexibilities provided.

Members were pleased to receive details of how the curriculum plan has been developed, noting the collaboration between departments across the Group, the

developing curriculum offer and the growth projections in terms of student numbers.

14. URGENT BUSINESS (ITEM 1C REFERS)

None

15. DATES OF C&Q COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2025/26

The Committee received and approved the planned dates for the Curriculum & Quality Committee meetings for 2025/26 (**ACTION 4**).

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)

The following points were made under AOB:

- staff were congratulated on the amazing Student Awards Ceremony that took place this week – the result of a huge amount of effort;
- the student governors were thanked for their useful contributions and comments; and finally
- the Chair thanked all governors for their attendance, contributions to meetings, support and challenge this year. She also thanked staff members for the detailed reports provided which had been easy to access and read and for providing detailed responses to issues raised during meetings.

Meeting closed at 6.30pm