

CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE of the Governing Body

**Minutes of the Committee held on Tuesday 6th May, 6.00pm
at Stanmore College and on MS Teams**

Present:

Mrs Hannah Butland (HB) - Chair (Teams)
Ms Kate Parsley (KP) - Vice Chair (Teams)
Mrs Annette Cast (AC) - Principal
Mr Julian Davies (JD) - Governor (Teams)
Mr Ramin Hashemain (RH) - Academic Staff Governor
Mr Zaid Ghandi (ZG) - Support Staff Governor

In Attendance:

Ms Angela Jackson (AJa) - Deputy Principal
Ms Stephanie Chittendon (SC) - Assistant Principal
Ms Justine Gooch (JG) - Director of MIS, IT, Admissions
Ms Gayle Brown (GB) - Director of Student Services & Safeguarding
Mr Ruairidh Kane (RK) - Director of Quality, Teaching & Learning
Ms Demi Stylianou (DS) - Curriculum & Quality Consultant
Ms Kayee Chan (KC) - Director of Governance

Apologies:

Ms Fatima Philisai Corneillia Ladranda Cutting (FPC) - Student Governor
Mr Shaurya Santosh Kuman Deshmukh (SD) - Student Governor

RESOLUTION

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2025.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE GOVERNING BODY

None

1. Chair's Opening Remarks and report of any Chairs Action taken since the last meeting

The Chair welcomed everyone present to the meeting. The Chair reminded presenters that papers should be taken as read by governors and to highlight the most salient points of the topic.

There were no Chairs Action taken since the last meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from Ms Fatima Philisai Corneillia Ladranda Cutting, Student Governor and Mr Shaurya Santosh Kuman Deshmukh, Student Governor.

The Director of Governance reported that all other members were present and the meeting was quorate.

3. Declarations of Interest

All governors confirmed that they had no interests that they were under a duty to disclose.

4. Minutes

4i. Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2025

The Committee agreed to confirm the approved draft minutes of its meeting on 4 February 2025, subject to corrections to typos, and authorised the Chair to sign them as a correct record of the meeting.

4ii. Action points review

There were no action points to review.

5. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance Annual report

- 6.1 The Director of Student Services and Safeguarding presented the Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance Annual Report, compiled by the Careers Advisor Team Leader. The report provided detailed summary and analysis of the work

undertaken by the Careers Team which indicated that delivery remained broadly in line with the previous year. While the College continued to make strong progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks, however met some challenges around Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) student meeting targets.

- 6.2 The Careers framework had recently undergone a 10year review, with minor changes including Gatsby Benchmarks around how destination data is gathered and used. The Director of Student Services and Safeguarding was asked to present an updated report on the new framework at the next meeting.
- 6.3 The UCAS application deadline had been brought forward by two weeks, prompting a shift in timelines for related support and activities. Despite this, improvements were noted in the quality of personal statements and references, assisted by the College's Progress Coaches. However, engagement from Russell Group universities remained low, despite invitations to them.
- 6.4 The Careers Team were preparing for their Matrix Accreditation reassessment in June this year where the team's activities formed a significant part of the assessment.
- 6.5 Governor comments and questions:
 - 6.5.1 Governors raised concerns around the high number of (54) student 'no-shows' to IAG appointments. Governors wanted assurance that a more efficient IAG process needed to be introduced to reduce missed appointments.
The Director of Student Services and Safeguarding acknowledged the issues around 'no-shows' and identified that they were largely as a result of a disjointed referral process. Suggestions were also made to include IAG appointments within tutorial days.
 - 6.5.2 A key risk identified was the over-reliance on a single Careers advisor. To mitigate this was that new staff recruitment in the Admissions team would now seek Level 4 IAG qualifications, and additional support was provided by the progress coaches and the work placement team. There were also plans to record students' full careers journey digitally, to give them a complete record upon leaving college.
 - 6.5.3 Lack of engagement from Russell Group universities – members agreed the lack of engagement may be down to universities own resource constraints and meeting targets, therefore they may prefer to target where there were larger groups of students, however ongoing efforts to improve engagement could still be made.
 - 6.5.4 To address capacity of staff, a recommendation was made to look at external online platforms which provide assistance in helping students with careers journeys.

7. Post 16 Qualification Reform

- 7.1 An update was provided on the evolving post-16 qualification reform landscape since the last report to governors in July 2024. Previously, under the outgoing government,

there were serious concerns about widespread defunding of Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications, which would have left only A levels, T Levels, and AAQs as funded options. This posed a major threat to vocational learners for whom T Levels or A levels may not be suitable.

- 7.2 Following the change in government, Labour paused the defunding process and had since allowed continued funding for a broader range of Level 3 qualifications. They reaffirmed support for T Levels as the primary Level 3 technical qualification, though the ambitious projection of “peak T Level” uptake by 2029 was met with some scepticism. A curriculum and assessment review is due in autumn 2025, and changes to Level 2 qualifications remain unclear. There was, however, growing recognition of the importance of Level 1 and Level 2 pathways for widening participation.
- 7.3 Upcoming Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE), is expected in 2026, which would support adult learners with tuition and maintenance loans for modular study at Levels 4–6. Alongside this, Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs), aligned to employer standards, were being encouraged.
- 7.4 On apprenticeships, the government planned to revise the levy, with 50% potentially allocated for training - details were still awaited. It was emphasised that developing clear progression routes and employer partnerships would be critical.
- 7.5 Governor comments and questions:
- 7.5.1 For a requested update, the Deputy Principal will return with a fuller update after the government Curriculum and Assessment Review in autumn 2025 or January 2026, to report on progress and updates. To also include progression pathways and a summary of current qualifications offered by the College for clarity.
- 7.5.2 Response to what steps the College would take to address the complexity and delivery of HTQs and priority areas for apprenticeship expansion, these were:
- HTQ Development – Directors of Faculty will visit other institutions to explore how HTQs are being implemented, especially in digital, and consider how to build these into the College’s offer.
 - Apprenticeship Growth Strategy – The College will focus on identifying key growth areas for apprenticeships, particularly in response to changes in the Growth and Skills Levy.
 - Curriculum Planning for the New Campus – With the new build due for completion in August 2027, planning will ensure alignment between curriculum development and new facilities.

8. QIP Progress

- 8.1 During the recent review of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), several key challenges were identified. Adult learner achievement remains below national average, though interpretation was limited by in-year enrolments and predictive systems. Entry Level 3 outcomes for 16–18 learners were also below expectations despite relatively strong attendance at that level. Overall attendance was below the College's 85% benchmark. The best rates were seen in 16–18 Entry Level and adult Level 1 learners, with slightly higher attendance among females.
- 8.2 Key next steps for strategies to improve include deep dives into adult and entry-level provision, improved employer engagement targets per Faculty and development of a refreshed attendance strategy. Governors were encouraged to increase their visibility and involvement in these processes, particularly through their link roles, sharing employer contacts, and participating in engagement forums. Ensuring consistent messaging and active involvement across all levels, from students to governors would be essential in driving continued improvement.
- 8.3 Governor comments and questions:
- 8.3.1 Key performance indicators (KPI) tracking – KPIs were regularly monitored and tracked at various levels of the organisation, from curriculum team meetings through to senior level meetings.
- 8.3.2 Improving attendance – members all agreed that strategies such as incentives to improve attendance (by previous experiences) would be effective and encourage a competitive process for students.
- 8.3.3 There was agreement on improving the QIP document's presentation to provide clarity - adding brief progress notes or directional indicator arrows to clarify the direction of change as happening but not yet complete. In particular, SEND and EHCP work need to be better reflected.
- 8.3.4 To ensure alignment of understanding from Heads of Faculty, governors would like to hear from them at future governor meetings.

9. Accountability Statement

- 9.1 An update on the Accountability Statement and London Skills and Improvement Plan (LSIP) outlined the key strengths and areas for development. Digital skills had been embedded in 16–18 study programmes, with some growth seen in T Levels and the integration of green skills across tutorials and courses. Numeracy had been supported through Multiply, and the SEND strategy was updated. Careers advice aligned with the Gatsby benchmarks, and employer engagement had been strengthened. There was growth in Health and Social Care enrolments, alongside new adult programmes in Creative Media and in Track Maintenance working in collaboration with Rail Futures and Job Centre Plus.

9.2 Areas for improvement included the need to better align Digital Skills for adults, more fully embed green skills across the curriculum, and address the slow uptake of T-Levels, attributed to limited awareness among learners and parents. Enrolments in Creative Media and Engineering remained low, therefore ongoing work to improve on a more structured employer engagement process and stronger post-course employment transitions was ongoing. Governors were encouraged to share employer contacts and were invited to partake in more curriculum activities and employer engagement events.

9.3 Governor comments and questions:

9.3.1 Governors welcomed the clarity on employer partnerships and supported clearer reporting formats, such as RAG ratings. They acknowledged the challenge of balancing transparency with sensitivity for public-facing documents and therefore would receive an internal RAG rated summary report.

9.3.2 Heads of Faculty and Curriculum Manager accountability and ownership - this was significantly improved; managers were aligning plans with LSIP and College strategic goals.

10. In Year Retention and Predicted Achievement

10.1 Update on in-year retention and predicted achievement, showed data comparing the College's performance to national benchmarks, including results from the national achievement tables. The analysis, based on final ILR data and Pro Achieve's "worst-case" predictions, showed that in North West London, the College ranked fourth overall, third for 16–18 learners, and sixth for 19+ learners, a decline from the previous year's second place in 19+ achievement.

10.2 When comparing the College's performance to 17 further education colleges across London, the results were as follows: sixth for 16–18 achievement, thirteenth for 19+ achievement, and eleventh overall. Despite being a smaller institution, the College performed strongly, particularly with 16–18 learners, which marked significant improvement compared to previous years. Additionally, excluding English and Maths, the College performed better in vocational 16–18 courses, ranking ninth out of 17 colleges.

10.3 The Quality Team had already begun addressing areas that showed underperformance, particularly in the 19+ category, via deep dives into curriculum areas. The College's leadership was working with curriculum managers to improve results where necessary.

10.4 Governor comments, questions and discussion:

- 10.4.1 Governors commended the College's strong performance and recommended increased publicity to highlight its achievements, positioning it as an excellent place to study. They suggested that the College should more confidently promote its successes, especially the impressive 16–18 results, which were likely to be of significant interest to parents. They stressed the importance of sharing success stories to foster positive perceptions of the College.
- 10.4.2 Understanding attendance issues would benefit from more qualitative feedback. Governors wanted to explore not just the numbers but also the reasons behind the attendance trends, suggesting that this could offer deeper insights into areas of concern.

11. Teaching & Learning Assessment and CPD Report

- 11.1 To address issues found in Curriculum Area Reviews, several steps were outlined, including targeted CPD sessions for teachers focusing on curriculum planning and classroom management, with bespoke support for those who need it. Additionally, a CPD program for middle managers and curriculum leaders was being developed, and the frequency of health checks was being increased. CPD feedback process have shifted to a more qualitative format. Continuous adjustments to the quality cycle were also being made. Positive steps had been taken to manage mobile phone distractions in classrooms, and trauma-informed teaching was being integrated more fully into the CPD program for 2025-2026. The importance of ongoing support from governors was highlighted, particularly through the link governor scheme, to help drive these initiatives forward.
- 11.2 Governor comments and questions:
 - 11.2.1 Governors noted that there were fewer recommendations in the deep dive report for Business compared to other subjects and pointed out the importance of entrepreneurship in the context of the London Plan and small businesses. The Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning explained this was because Business had already been intensely supported with an ongoing action plan in the lead up to the current report but acknowledged further context to support this work would have been usefully included. Also, efforts to strengthen recruitment on Business teachers were ongoing to improve teaching in the area. It was noted that staff teaching contracts at Stanmore College compared favourably against other colleges.
 - 11.2.2 Effective CPD monitoring - teachers underwent a formal developmental observation. If a teacher did not meet the required standard, they were provided with a coaching cycle before being re-observed to demonstrate progress.
 - 11.2.3 Effective CPD planning - curriculum managers would develop subject-specific CPD plans, supported by a structured process to triangulate student feedback, achievement data, and lesson observations. These plans would be pitched to senior leaders in term one of 2025–26 to ensure relevance and impact, with governors potentially involved.

12. Curriculum Area Reviews

- 12.1 The College conducted deep dive reviews of curriculum areas each term, which included lesson visits, quality assessments, and student focus groups. Term 2 reviews focused on Business and Engineering. The findings highlighted issues such as students in Business feeling unprepared for assessments, inconsistent teaching quality, and a high reliance on cover teachers due to low attendance. In contrast, Engineering students, particularly those in T-levels, showed strong engagement and good attendance, despite some teaching inconsistencies. Steps were being taken to address these issues as described in section 11.

13. Meeting Review, Learning and Reflection

- 13.1 Governors raised concerns about the time and effort required to produce lengthy reports, questioning whether all content was necessary and suggesting more efficient formats. Members discussed reducing the volume of papers and making meetings more impactful by including student and staff presentations, which would also improve transparency and engagement.
- 13.2 The timing of meetings was highlighted as a key issue, with recent schedules leading to compressed workloads followed by long gaps. A review of the meeting cycle was being reviewed for 2025-26 and would be better aligned with reporting cycles. Timings of meetings to better accommodate attendance was also being considered.
- 13.3 Appreciation was expressed to all for the quick turnaround on the agenda and papers.

14. Date of Next Meeting – 2025-2026 Dates TBC

The meeting ended at 7.40pm

Kayee Chan, Director of Governance

Schedule of Actions:

	Action	Responsible	By When	Progress
2.	To follow up on non-attendance of student governors at the meeting.	DoG/ KC	May 2025	
4i.	To amend typos in minutes of the last meeting 04.02.25 for Chair's sign off.	DoG/ KC	May 2025	
6.2	To provide an updated IAG report based on the new framework at the next governors' meeting.	Director of SS/ GB	Autumn 2025	
6.5.1	To review and implement a more efficient IAG process particularly around referrals.	Director of SS/ GB	Autumn 2025	
7.5.1	To provide an update on the Post 16 Qualification Reform after the Curriculum and Assessment Review in autumn 2025, or January 2026, to report on progress, government decisions, and curriculum developments. To include a summary of current qualifications offered by the college, to give context and aid clarity and progression pathways.	Deputy Principal/ AJa	Autumn 2025 / January 2026	
8.3.4	Heads of Faculty to be invited to future C&Q Committee meetings to ensure that alignment of understanding of the QiP.	DoG/ KC	Autumn 2025	
9.3.1	To receive a RAG rated summary of the Accountability Statement/LSIP report.	Assistant Principal/ SC	Autumn 2025	
10.4.1	To promote and publicise the College's successful achievement rates.	Director of MIS, IT, Admn/ JG	Autumn 2025	
13.2	Review meetings dates for 2025-26.	Chair & DoG	June 2025	