## Minutes

## **RNN** GROUP

Meeting	Quality and Standards Committee		
Date	Tuesday 24 September 2024	Time	17:00-19:00
Venue	Google meet		
Membership:	Jenny Worsdale (Chair); Katie Asgari; Jason A		· · · · · ·

Gillborn; Jack Pike; Ian Sutherland; Fatima Sabir; Carol Stanfield
Tracey Mace-Akroyd (Deputy Principal/CEO); Lucy Barnwell (Director of Learner Recruitment
and Marketing); James Godsell (Director of Business Development and Apprenticeships);
Cheryl Martin (Director of Quality and Academic Standards); Laura Reid (Director of
Safeguarding and Student Support); Mark Ryan (Vice Principal Curriculum); Daniel Stanbra
(Director of Adult Education and Contracts); Cath Mollart (Executive Director Strategic
Planning and Corporate Services); Sarah Connerty (Director of Governance and minute taker)

		Action
1.	<ul> <li>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</li> <li>The Chair welcomed colleagues to the meeting, the student governors to their first</li> <li>Committee and the ED Corporate Services and Strategic Planning who is joining to update at item 17 on compliments/complaints.</li> <li>Apologies received from the staff governor Katie Asgari and the Director of Adult Education and Contracts was held up at another meeting and unable to attend.</li> </ul>	
2.	<b>Declarations of interest</b> There were no declarations received.	
3.	<b>Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2024</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.	
4.	Matters arising Actions from the Board 8 July 2024: Action 1 – CLOSED: to provide the Board with a breakdown of apprenticeships when enrolments come in – included at item 14 Action 2 – CLOSED: governors need to see the direction of travel in the safeguarding report and asked that 3-year trend data is included – included at item 5 Action 3 – CLOSED: Maths and English results - the Board will be kept fully updated as this work progresses – update at item 9 and 10.5. Update to the Board on 9 October Action from the Finance and Resources Committee 25 June: Action 1 - One governor asked if the Committee can be assured that the Quality and Standards Committee is monitoring in detail the performance and achievements of the subcontractors. ACTION: The Director of Adult Education and Contracts reported prior to the meeting that he has provided a granular report to SLT which can be shared with the Committee Actions from the last meeting:	

	<ul> <li>Action 1 – Safeguarding and EDI report discussions - Tracey reported that an impact KPI on transition to positive outcomes for care experience learners could be included. The Committee agreed with this suggestion as care experience learners are transient and acknowledging this and looking at positive outcomes would be a valuable exercise – update: this is an area of focus and work and focus groups will take place</li> <li>Action 2 – Applications and enrolments report - The learner journey in respect to different groups to be picked up and documented about how learners progress through college – update at item 7</li> <li>Action 3 – CLOSED: Momentous sports partnership – on the agenda at item 15</li> <li>Action 4 - The Chair noted that she would like to see correlation when the results come in across attendance and achievement and the Director of Adult Education and Contracts noted he was happy to produce this for the September Committee – update - this work will be started when all results are in</li> <li>Action 5 - It was agreed that it would be useful to work with the Director of Adult Education and Contracts on where areas of low attendance and high achievement are to see what other support learners are receiving. It was agreed that a piece of work when the results are in looking at lower attendance and higher grades will come back to the Committee next year – related to action 4</li> <li>Action 6 – CLOSED: The Director of Learner Recruitment and VP Curriculum and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards to meet to take forward marketing of HE courses – this has been actioned and there is an ongoing focus on HE marketing</li> <li>Quality and Standards Committee – 20 March 2024</li> <li>Action 2 – cuovene a final Apprenticeships Task and Finish Group – this is pending and a meeting will be scheduled before half term depending on availability</li> <li>Quality and Standards Committee – 31 January 2024</li> <li>Action 2 – CLOSED: final NSS results to be share</li></ul>	
5.	agenda at item 13Safeguarding and Prevent1. Report (including 3-year support trends, response to recent events/demonstrations and transition to positive outcomes for LAC)2. Prevent Action Plan-it was noted that there is one addition to the Plan under 12 incident management – the plan is being reviewed following the civil unrest during the summer in RotherhamThe Committee considered the Safeguarding Annual Report and the Prevent Action Plan. One governor asked how often the team checks in with subcontractors around safeguarding. The Director of Safeguarding and Student Support reported that disclosures sit with contractors who follow the same processes as the Group. The Committee asked how the team know processes are being followed and it was confirmed the processes are built into the subcontractor rules and is recorded. [after note: The Director of Safeguarding and Student Support notes that to add further reassurance, the Sub Contracting team will send an update monthly regarding safeguarding concerns. This will include a nil return where no issues/ concerns have been raised. This will be added into the Committee report going forward] One governor noted the sharp increase in anxiety (+52) and ask for further information on why this is and what is being done about it. The Director of Safeguarding and Student Support explained that students are coming forward sooner because there are more members of the team who are able to capture more. There are now attendance and increased pastoral support staff in place. Students missing early sessions is often for anxiety reasons and the team are still seeing post Covid anxiety. It was agreed that as long as it is being treated that is the most important thing.	

	students. A trauma informed approach strategy which will triage anxieties before they escalate is being rolled out and further details will come to the Committee.
	<ol> <li>Safeguarding for All Policy</li> <li>The Committee considered the policy and the updates proposed: (updates highlighted on pages: 6(roles and responsibilities), 7 (governors role), 9(virtual school teachers), 13 (item 11- staff supporting students), 14 (intimate care), 16 (early help support), 18 (Prevent concerns and reporting), 20 (parental contact and sharing of information), 25 (understanding data protection), 26 (statutory guidance), 32 (abuse).</li> <li><b>RESOLVED:</b> The Committee recommended to approve the Safeguarding for All Policy to the Board</li> </ol>
	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 1. FREDIE (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement) Action
	Plan 2024-2025 The Director of Safeguarding and Student Support explained that the Group has taken forward the term FREDIE and is moving forward to embed it across the Group. Key points included:
	<ul> <li>A sub group working party was been formed to review the Investors in Diversity (IiD) assessment feedback and recommendations.</li> </ul>
5.	An action Plan has been created based on the recommendations, which requires final
).	<ul> <li>approval at the FREDIE and Safeguarding Committee</li> <li>The promotion of FREDIE has taken place in induction talks and events for students and the Weekly message from the CEO to all staff communications.</li> <li>2. FREDIE Policy 2024-2027</li> </ul>
	The Committee considered the FREDIE Policy.
	<b>RESOLVED:</b> The Committee recommended to approve the FREDIE Policy 2024-27 to the Board.
	The Committee noted that the EDI link governor is stepping down from the Board in November. New governors are recommended for approval to the October Board and include
	an EDI champion who is happy to take on the role.Applications and Enrolments 2024-25 [action 2 and 6 from 24 June]
7.	The Chair noted that item 16 Curriculum Planning will be taken alongside this item. The Director of Learner Recruitment and Marketing reported that today's enrolments stand at 3928 overall, with 3798 EFA enrolments. This is against a target of 3670 which is 128 over target. The Chair asked for a benchmark against last year and this was 3188. The ED Corporate Services and Strategic Planning noted that changes have been made this year on the enrolment of progressing students and there may be a drop in numbers. The Committee asked with more students are there any issues with capacity for teachers and the VP Curriculum confirmed that teachers are in classrooms and teaching is starting. There has been a slight increase of students with a high volume enrolled at Rotherham College; NNC
	<ul> <li>is in line with last year, and there is a drop at DVC. The teams have worked hard over the summer to ensure teachers are in place to deliver. Staff Recruitment Forms (SRFs) have been assigned and appointed and there are only spaces where staff are resigning or retiring and there are staff in place to cover.</li> <li>English and maths teaching has started at the same time and class lists have been devised for the high number of students.</li> </ul>
	One governor asked about HE enrolments.

Enrolments are still happening for HE. There are some areas of concern which Marketing is looking at. It is an ongoing situation to market and push hard through online campaigning. One area of concern is Public Services and the resource for the area has been moved elsewhere. Other areas of focus include Level 4 Performing Arts, Digital and Teacher Ed. Numbers stand at 333 against a target of 427. A meeting took place today with the Director of Campus to look at interventions and reassessing and realigning for January starts with focused marketing. One governor asked why there are fewer HE enrolments against a lower target and if the issues are just around marketing why are the numbers so different over the last two years. The VP Curriculum noted that there has been a hit on HE numbers across the FE sector. Some universities, including local ones, are offering unconditional offers to increase numbers. The CEO and Principal noted that there is a lot of local competition and local universities have been restructuring and looking at other markets such as Level 4 and 5. Sheffield University has dropped down to 104 in the rankings, and Sheffield Hallam University is doing a lot of work on Higher Level Degree Apprenticeships. The Committee agreed that it is a difficult situation. <b>ACTION:</b> HE to be a key item of discussion at the Board Strategy Day looking at the offer, costs and competition in the region The DCEO noted that one of the reasons for the reduction in numbers is the Group's decision to stop Counselling at Level 4 because of staffing issues. This was a large cohort. A positive position is the increases in Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. The curriculum and market are shifting from more traditional degrees into more Higher and Degree Apprenticeships and Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) and modular qualifications. There has been some modelling on dropping fees down to lower than the Access and Participation Plan (APP) and how many more students would need to be recruited and whether the curriculum pl	Exec/ Board
Cost of living and the economy is a big factor with people choosing to work rather than train	
and it is about getting the message out. Courses at the Bridge Skills Hub give the opportunity for those not wanting to learn in a traditional college environment.	
The VP Curriculum noted that fees do need to be considered for our locality and there are	
reports of students who are borrowing up to £44k for HE and cost is a factor.	
The Director of Learner Recruitment and Marketing reported on action 2 on the learner	
journey and explained that tracking is not currently done as well as the team would like to.	
 For current learners progression will be looked at this year. There is an eight-week induction	

	programme and it is about creating a better experience while learners are here and tracking
	some really good information on progression and better feedback on experiences in the first few weeks.
	Risk Report (including key Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2024/25 aspects and underpinning reports)         The Committee considered the QIP including progress against KPIs and the risk register
	<ul> <li>The DCEO reported on the areas which are a priority for the SLT and gave assurances that attention was focused on the following for the Autumn term:</li> <li>Securing predicted Achievement outcomes for 2023/24.</li> <li>Ensuring all learners feel welcomed, understand the high expectations and settle into</li> </ul>
8.	<ul><li>their studies well.</li><li>Staffing/recruitment in curriculum areas to meet enrolment demands e.g. Engineering</li></ul>
	work-based welding (NNC), plumbing (RC) and mechanical (RC), study programme plumbing/electrical (NNC), maths tutors and learning support staff to meet increased numbers of learners with EHCPs (Group).
	<ul> <li>Curriculum provision- new T level and T level transition programmes and FLEX provision.</li> <li>Student behaviour for a small minority of learners (DVC)</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Student behaviour for a small minority of learners (DVC).</li> <li>Competition from external education providers delivering curriculum provision close to campuses (JTL at DVC) and (University Centre Doncaster at the Bridge Skills HUB Worksop).</li> </ul>
	Group data summary report 2023-24 year end (predicted as final performance not confirmed until end Oct 2024 ILR return)The Chair asked that item 10 is covered as part of this item.The DCEO reported that this is still a predicted report as there is one final return to do in October. After that reporting will take place against all the strategic indicators, with more scrutiny on campuses, courses and programme levels.The headline is that all strategic indicators are going up.English and maths is improving with more learners taking exams and passing, but work is needed to fix withdrawals. Every time the Group loses a vocational learner, the E&M is a withdrawal. At the moment for 16-18s this means the Group is 4% below national rates
9.	despite the positive trends and trajectories. The Chair asked about the differences in data in this report and the reports in item 10.1. The DCEO explained it is about the timings of papers. Papers in item 10.1 are using the R12 data from August and on the paper circulation day R13 reports were available and are included in this item. The final R14 is in the return to the funding agency in October and confirms the Group's final position.
	The Chair asked for separate results on E&M. English is slightly above and there are no real gaps in achievements. The Chair asked about high grades in E&M. There are no gaps between E&M. There is a national trend in results declining with 4% lower in maths and 10% lower in English. For the Group high grades in maths are below 10% and for English it is above national rates. This does reflect the national picture but it is not where the Group wants to be. Nationally a lot of colleges were impacted by grade boundary changes in June. The Group were not affected because they use a different exam body, but the model for Maths was changed in January 2024 after swift action showed that the previous model was not working. Since the changes more learners have sat exams and more have passed but with only a four-month run in it has not been enough to influence high grades and that is the focus for this year.

	The Chair asked about colleges putting large numbers of grade 3 learners into November exams, the grade boundaries being easier, and asked if this is a strategy at the Group. The VP Curriculum and Director of Quality and Academic Standards noted that this strategy ensures early completions for those that pass and protects retention and achievement but achievement is not high. The Group considered this last year but due to the high percentage of learners who need access arrangements for exams and the disruption of closing campuses a strategic decision was made to put the grade 3 learners through November exams but not the grade 1 and 2s. One governor noted the evidence of how dispiriting it is for learners to continue to fail their English and Maths qualification. It was agreed there are a lot of different factors to consider. One governor noted the data that 13.55% of students progressed beyond their previous achievement in maths and English and asked if this relates to Functional Skills. The DCEO looked up the data tables in the Director of Adult Education and Contracts' absence and explained this is relating to GCSE analysis on prior attainment versus actual results. There is an action from the previous meeting for the DCEO to work with the Director of Adult Education and Contracts to show clear progression data and this will be taken forward. <b>Quality of Education Reports</b> The Committee considered the reports and discussions took place under item 9. <b>1. 16-18 (including High Needs)</b>	
	The data for the 2023/24 academic year shows strong overall progress in student knowledge, skills, and behaviours, with high satisfaction levels and improved achievement rates. While there is a slight decline in overall retention rates, targeted efforts at specific campuses, particularly for High Needs students, show positive trends. See full report for details. <b>2.</b> Adults (including detailed subcontracting) Almost every adult learner is expected to achieve (indicated 91.9% achievement; +2pp 22/23). Subcontractor activity continues to be indicated to be of a high standard with achievement exceeding internal group levels as a result of rigorous provision.	
10.	<ul> <li>3. Apprentices There is improvement across all areas. Level 3 and HE apprenticeships continue to grow due to improved progressions. In 22/23 there was 8 new HE apprentices and 142 new level 3 apprentices. This has increased in 23/24 to 29 new HE apprentices and 177 new level 3 apprentices. This is a 28% increase year on year. There is a 64% turnaround which is above national average and 13% more than last year. This is helped by a reduction in out of funded learners (OOFs). The Chair noted that this is a really good improvement and a much stronger position than many colleges are facing. 4. HE See item 9. 5. English &amp; Maths See item 9.</li></ul>	
11.	Quality Arrangements Cycle FE&HE 2024/25 (including SAR/SED process) The Director of Quality and Academic Standards noted that the report sets out the HE and FE cycle for the year. There are scheduled themed learning walks and these will be circulated to governors who are welcome to join any of the walks. A change to the process for deep dives is being finalised and details will be available in the next couple of weeks. More work will be done around notice to improve and this will feed into risk reports. The aim is to carry out the deep dives and then see a quick impact and improvement. One governor noted that she would be interested in shadowing the deep dive on learning support on 4 November 2024.	
12.	<b>T Level Report</b> The Committee considered the report and the VP Curriculum invited questions.	

	The Committee asked about a number of students who didn't get to do their industry	
	placements. Work is ongoing with the Business Development team to get more pledges from	
	employers. It is a national picture, with digital in particular, because more staff are working	
	from home. Work is starting with businesses collaborating with colleges with the opportunity	
	to work within colleges. For this cohort learners will catch up and do their placement hours in	
	year 2.	
	The Committee colord for further datails on the near merulas in the Unaltherne T lovel at	
	The Committee asked for further details on the poor results in the Healthcare T Level at	
	Rotherham. The VP Curriculum noted that this was an issue with teaching, learning, logical	
	sequencing and exam preparation. Across the Group Healthcare was positive. At NNC the	
	department work collaboratively with the Trust at Bassetlaw and this is less evident with the	
	Rotherham Trust. The T Level was run for the first time last year and it was a learning curve.	
	A lot of work has been put in place over the summer sharing good practice across the Group	
	and two nurse practitioners and NHS Trust placement offers are in place.	
	The Student Governor noted that there were also issues getting placements on the T level	
	computing course, and asked if this is expected to get better over the next two to three years.	
	The VP Curriculum explained that the Department for Education (DfE) has allowed colleges to	
	be more creative and innovative. Last year employers came into the colleges and some	
	learners at NNC went out on placement. It is about how we can work more broadly with	
	employers, to provide all learners with the opportunities to be successful, including utilising	
	guest speakers, to ensure learners are industry ready.	
	There was assurance that all the learners and their families on the Health T-Level have been	
	met with to look at alternative programmes and are where they need to be. Two have moved	
	onto a different provider. There had been a deep dive which had picked up some issues but	
	not the extent of them. Quality measures have been relooked at and combined visits won't	
	be carried out anymore and there will be a rapid move into intervention for areas of risk	
	instead of waiting for an action plan to be produced. The Staff Governor noted that	
	complaints were anticipated but overall, the learners and their families were satisfied by the	
	actions taken by the curriculum staff and management.	
	NSS survey results	
	The Committee considered the report and the Director of Quality and Academic Standards	
	reported that the key areas of focus are:	
	• Further investigate the reasons for the decline in satisfaction for "Learning	
	Opportunities".	
	• Further investigate the reasons for the decline in satisfaction rates in comparison to the	
	excellent satisfaction that was reported for 2022/23.	
	Only the Foundation Degree in Learning Support mot the criteria for individual results to be	
1	Only the Foundation Degree in Learning Support met the criteria for individual results to be published and there are 13 learners on this course. The Group is hit both ways as it is a low	
	number of learners and there are only a certain number of learners in the scope of the NSS	
13.	Survey. The Committee questioned the usefulness of this when a much larger number of	
	learners contribute to the survey and it does not give a true representation of overall	
	learner's views.	
	One governor asked about rankings. The Director of Quality and Academic Standards	
1	explained that raw data is provided in a huge file and in the appendices, it does give results	
	against the sector. It was agreed the time taken to get this analysis should only be done if it is	
1		
	useful for the Group. It was agreed that picking up some of the great results in the survey and using to celebrate and put into our marketing would be a good exercise.	
1	using to celebrate and put into our marketing would be a good exercise.	
	The satisfaction results for Mental Heath and Wellbeing are excellent and is an area that	
1	universities are struggling with and the Group know they are doing this well.	
	The Group's results are 90.91 against a sector threshold of 86.44.	

	The Committee suggested it is about looking at how we stand out and the individualised and	[
	bespoke support that we are very good at.	
	Employer Engagement Report	
14.	The Director of Business Development and Apprenticeships reported on the apprenticeship profile of 306 starts by October 2024. The apprenticeship provision is predicted to grow by £300k in 24/25 and reach 1000 funded apprentices by April 25. There has been growth in HE apprenticeships and the team are more stringent with employers having the right paperwork submitted in a timely manner. 23 High Apprenticeships have been enrolled (compared to 10 last year) As of 16 September, there have been 2018 apprenticeships engaged. There is a suggestion in the sector that the government is looking to defund Level 7 provision. This would be upsetting for the team as a lot of effort has gone into the Senior Leader Programme, although a lot of the programme could map into the Level 6. The Group has an arm's length agreement with both NHS trust and strong relationships and this is an area of focus.	
	Momentous Sports Partnership Update	
15.	The Committee considered the update and the VP Curriculum confirmed that work has started and there is engagement across all three campuses and different curriculum areas. Learners have demonstrated strong and positive behaviours and it is going well. The DCEO noted that the Director of Safeguarding and Student Support and the Personal Development Team are working with the Momentous team and there will be an in-year review of the provision and how well it is working and any interest from other providers.	
16	Curriculum Planning including Sustainability in the Curriculum	
16.	This item was taken under item 7.	
17.	Compliments and Complaints <ol> <li>Summary of Complaints 2023-24</li> <li>The ED Strategic Planning and Corporate Services provided an overview of the annual summary. One governor asked if students who are subcontracted can put in a complaint to the Group and it was confirmed the process is the same as for any other student. There were none received last year and a potential complaint which is being looked into for this year.</li> </ol>	
18.	<ul> <li>Policies         <ol> <li>Safeguarding for All Policy – covered under item 5.3</li> <li>FREDIE policy 2024-7 (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity Inclusion and Engagement Policy) – covered under item 6.2</li> </ol> </li> <li>*Items carried</li> </ul>	
19.	Governance items <ol> <li>Terms of reference</li> <li>The Director of Governance noted that the terms of reference of all Committees have been updated so they are consistent in format. The Quality and Standards Committee had clear terms of reference and updates have been minor with the aim of making clearer the Committee's remit. All areas from the current terms of reference are included in the proposed version, with the ordering changed and some changes to the format. The only area removed is 1.2.4 on the role of the Chair.</li> <li>RESOLVED: The Committee recommended to approve the Quality and Standards terms of reference to the Board</li> <li>Membership</li> <li>The Committee has a strong membership with relevant skills and expertise, and attendance is good. Updates considered included:         <ul> <li>The recent governor recruitment process is recommending two new governors with skills in education (student voice/SEND and education/HE) who will join the Quality and Standards Committee for the November 2024 Committee</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	

- Heather Barnett is stepping down as a Board member in November after the next Committee. Heather has a wealth of expertise in EDI and SEND and is the EDI link governor and it was agreed it was important for this support and oversight to continue
- The Chair of the Committee is the Chair of the Board and it was agreed this would be reviewed at a future meeting
- The Search and Governance Committee has recommended including vice chairs on Committees to support the Chair and as a development opportunity for governors.

## Membership for 2024

Jenny Worsdale (Chair) Jason Austin (ex-officio) Katie Asgari (staff governor) Heather Barnett (until 23 November 2024) Donna Clifford Sally Gillborn Jack Pike (student governor) Fatima Sabir (student governor) Carol Stanfield Ian Sutherland (staff governor) Plus 2 recommended appointments from 9 October 2024 This is a membership of 12 governors (11 after November

This is a membership of 12 governors (11 after November) made up of 7 independents (6 from November), two staff governors, two student governors and the Principal and CEO. The Committee considered membership size and agreed to continue and review at a later date.

## 3. Review of effectiveness

Historically the Committee has completed a questionnaire which is reported back to the summer meeting. A survey was circulated in the summer and was completed by eight members. The survey results are positive (see paper for details and analysis) Across all the Committee reviews there were suggestions to streamline papers further and this work will be taken forward with Chairs and Exec after this round of meetings. The DCEO and Chair have already met to discuss. The aim is to provide a set of papers that support governors in their decision making and support and challenge and do not take paper writers too long to draft. There is some interesting feedback on the impact the Committee made in the last 12 months:

- Ensured review of key risk for quality, e.g. apprenticeships improved performance
- Agendas have become risk driven so the papers provide details of progress in key areas
- New appointed governors with skills we didn't currently have
- Reviewed and made recommendations to the College SAR
- Ensured that the quality of the Group's operation and standards of service are effectively and efficiently met
- Reviewed policies, reviewed the curriculum, ask questions about the data (in particular attendance). Request for data to be presented in a particular way to enable a fuller picture
- Retained Investors in Diversity accreditation, members of the Committee had a key role to play in this and in the follow up work that is ongoing.
- 4. Training and development

	Short governor development sessions are scheduled through the year for all governors to learn more about different areas of the Group. The first session is 30 September 2024 at 17.00 on CEIAG. Learning walk and deep dive timetables are included in today's papers and will be circulated to governors. One governor noted that it would be useful to set up access across papers to annotate to support collaboration amongst governors and as a useful aide for Exec. <b>ACTION:</b> It was agreed to look at the practicalities of annotating and sharing papers on the google drive and to get advice from Jason Thomas. The Director of Governance and ED Corporate Services and Strategic Planning to take forward	Dir of Gov/ ED Strat Planning and Corp Services
20.	Any other items There were no items raised.	
21.	Date of next meetings: Tuesday 19 November 2024 Tuesday 11 March 2025 Tuesday 10 June 2025 All 17.00 start	

**\*Policies carried to the next meeting**: Arrangements for Obtaining the Views of Staff and Students (coming to the next meeting to include any feedback from the strategy day)

Student Union Constitution (this is being worked on currently and will come to the Committee at a later meeting)

Meeting closed: 18.26