

REASEHEATH COLLEGE BOARD
QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2026 at 9.30am
Committee Room, Reaseheath College

Present: Mike Gorton (independent), chair
 Ashley Austin (independent)
 Nick Blakemore (staff)
 Claire Blanchard (independent)
 Marcus Clinton (principal)
 Jane Cowell (independent)
 Peter Green (independent)

In attendance: James Eagney (assistant principal)
 Paul Spearritt (vice principal)
 Wendy Brissett (head of teaching learning and innovation)
 Wendy Watson (head of quality)
 Kirsty Thornton (student life manager)
 Jackie Schillinger (head of governance)
 Rob Lawson (observer, external board reviewer, association of colleges)
 via Teams

PART A unless stated

Item	Content
1.	Opening items
1.1	Apologies and Declarations: Apologies were received accepted from Charlotte Brooks due to study commitments. There were no declarations made in relation to the agenda items. The chair welcomed staff governor Nick Blakemore to his first committee meeting, as well as Rob Lawson, who was observing via MS Teams as part of the external board review.
1.2	RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.
1.3	Matters arising: - The Chair confirmed the action log items were covered on the meeting agenda. - A governor noted that members of the committee were attending the staff conference on inclusion later in the month, which looked an excellent programme. He recommended that governors coordinate on the day so that they can cover the different breakout sessions, and he suggested those attending do some notes to feedback following the conference. The head of governance confirmed six governors were attending and confirmed she would ensure there is a chance to feedback at the board meeting later this term. ACTION.
1.4	Committee cycle of business: The updated cycle of committee business for 2025-26 was considered. The head of governance highlighted one change. This was that the item on CPD for staff was moved to the summer term. In response, the following points were covered in discussion:

	• A governor queried the timing and content of this planned session. He thought the committee getting a feel for what is going on across the college earlier in the year was important as well as at the end of the year. The vice principal curriculum and quality acknowledged the request and suggested that this be built into the schedule of business going forwards, as an end of year review and plan for the following year, with a mid-year review of progress. ACTION. • The discussion turned to the benefit of staff members going into industry settings regularly to maintain and update their industry knowledge. One governor noted that this works well from his experience in his role at another further education college, as an 'industry day' annually as well as the ongoing engagement throughout the year. • Discussion focused on how staff going into industry happens in the college currently and the balance with the risk to recruitment and retention of staff in hard to recruit areas, which can limit time away from teaching. The staff governor gave an example of how this happens alongside student provision in his department when students go on industry visits, the staff also take this opportunity for their own CPD by working with industry peers. • A governor asked how CPD and maintaining industry knowledge was linked to performance development reviews (PDRs) of individual staff. The assistant principal confirmed it is built into PDRs, and these conversations are taking place, but it is the consistency of this that needs to be reviewed as well as ensuring this engagement is logged and visible. • Discussion on the content of a committee review of CPD at the next meeting concluded that there should be sufficient time to have a good look at this, taking into account the points made, and it should aim to show CPD by department, any concerns, as well as considering impact and examples. ACTION.
1.5	RESOLVED: The updated cycle of committee business for 2025-26 was confirmed, with those agreed actions noted.
2.	TOR2 Monitor performance on quality of the learner experience: Learner Involvement and Enrichment/Complaints Monitoring
2.1	Learner Involvement and Enrichment review: The student life manager presented an update on student life activity and impact so far in the year. In summary the key points were: • This year the timetable for FE students has reverted to the full study day over three days rather than extended over four days. This means we do not have the end of the day slot that was trialled last year, but we are doing lunchtimes for activities. The refurbishment and repurposing of the student bar area to a multi-use social space has had positive impact in terms of increased use of this space. • It is now more inclusive. We have seen a wider range of student using the space including more female students and under 18 students. It is very busy at lunchtimes and social activities like darts and table tennis are popular. So, whilst there are probably fewer structured activities taking place this year during the day, the use of social space has increased. • Increased engagement in evening social events this year, due to more advanced promotion and better communication. • A good balance between day and residential student engagement as well as under 18 and over 18 students.

	- Engagement by curriculum area generally reflects the size of that department. An increase in engagement by apprentices compared to last year, with work to build these relationships by the student union paying off. - We intend to use the newly introduced Kinetic KX suite for registering for promoting and registering events to support non-intrusive data collection - Student societies are running this year, but are currently being reviewed to create fewer, larger groups as there quite a range that have very small numbers and cover similar subject areas. - Raising and Giving (RAG) for the David Lewis charity is on track so far this year, with the aim of raising £20,000 by year end.
2.2	Challenge provided by governors in the discussion that followed, highlighted the main areas as: - A governor noted that the data showed fewer foundation students engaging in the evening social events. Therefore, queried how inclusive the offer is and how it can be adapted to increase this? Evening events now include, where staffing allows it, the opening of a quiet space area. This was done at the winter ball and received good feedback. We have also been flexible with the timing of activities as far as possible. One aspect that can limit evening activity is that many foundation level students are day students, so they go home in the evening. - A governor followed up by asking if those students at foundation level have their voices heard in terms of student enrichment and social activities? The foundation team run and promote showcase activities led by the foundation students throughout the year, including the Christmas Fair. There is a strong general enrichment programme within the curriculum, but there may still be some avenues to explore further linked to student life and the SU activities. One of the student life team members works with the foundation students once a week, and she brings back feedback and suggestions. However, it would be good to explore this further with foundation level students and staff themselves. ACTION. - In response to the presentation a governor asked how well does the whole college engage with RAG week activities? We are aiming to increase engagement by all departments. Some departments engage very well; others are less active. - Governors requested that the executive team give a clear message to the curriculum area managers to ensure their department gets involved this year if they have not already. ACTION. - A governor queried whether the team has considered incentivising students to get more involved in these enrichment opportunities? The assistant principal confirmed that they were looking at the gamification side of things, and that there is an element of this already in the career ready passport, but this is being developed looking at the more visible badging of this.
2.3	RESOLVED: The Committee thanked the student life and student union team for the very important and valuable work undertaken as part of the student life experience, which helps to enrich the overall student experience in many areas and requested that the executive team give a clear message to the curriculum area managers to ensure their departments get involved in the RAG activities this year.
2.4	FE learner complaints review: The Committee reviewed College performance in relation to complaints received, managed and responded to as one indicator of the quality of the learner experience, as well as how policy and process were being implemented. Compliments received into the central quality team were also reviewed. Themes identified from the analysis of complaints by the Head of Quality were:

	• The need to improve communication to parents and learners, which could avoid many stage 1 complaints. • Response required to support behaviour management and interactions on student transport. • Continued support for student behaviour management. • Response actioned via HR process in relation to staff conduct in two areas.
2.5	Challenge provided by governors in the discussion that followed, highlighted the main areas as: • A governor asked how the level of complaints received compared with what might be expected - has there been an increase? The main increase in complaints for the College was the period following Covid, that year back on site with various challenges, an increase was seen. This year so far there has not been an increase on the previous year. We have seen several complaints regarding transport services, but with these aside, the level of complaints is low. There are also fewer complaints going to a higher stage, as the College is managing to resolve issues at stage 1. • A governor queried the theme of communication and how do we understand what the problem with communication is and what can be done? The Principal responded that a number of these relate to the return to spring term with the snow disruption and communication of that. This has been addressed with parents and staff. The other communication theme around transport services we are working with our transport provider to ensure the staff have clear guidance on the quality of communication we expect with our students, including those with additional learning needs. • A governor linked this with other reporting of several cases of professional conduct in communication practices with staff and questioned whether more needs to be done at curriculum area level across the College? The Principal agreed that this continues to be a theme and is a focus of the upcoming staff conference on inclusion with a piece looking at that relational practice, with on-going work on inclusive practice at curriculum area level. • A governor sought assurance that policy and process timelines were being followed as there were a couple of complaints that seemed to have been open a long time. The Head of Quality provided assurance that timelines are followed, and if this needs to be extended there is a reason such as the delay can be caused by communicating via a third party like an MP, or if there has been a half term break for example. Occasionally, the person investigating the matter may be absent for a short while and this can affect the timeline. However, this is always communicated by the Head of Quality and kept to a minimum. • A governor asked whether the College is satisfied it is picking up all the complaints via its policy and other informal mechanisms and not missing something important? The Committee accepted that various informal issues are dealt with day to day by the curriculum managers and by the Head of Quality and do not then become a registered complaint. The QR code on the See It Say It posters around college and the student services team also pick up any concerns. Assurance was taken that the processes in place are capturing the important issues. • A governor welcomed the compliments shown in the report and especially the number of compliments about foundation level provision. • A governor requested more visibility of learner's views via the course representation mechanism in future. ACTION.

2.6	RESOLVED: The meeting was assured that the complaints policy and process was being managed effectively, with themes and actions identified and with the compliments summary welcomed, with it good to see the number of compliments about foundation level provision.
3.	TOR1 Advise the Board on arrangements for assuring the quality and standards of all educational activities
3.1	The meeting reviewed reporting from the Assistant Principal on the impact of quality improvement work on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including feedback, learning support in lessons, as well as the performance on the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme. Members also considered feedback from the recent governor learning walk/other activity.
3.2	Challenge provided by governors in the discussion that followed, highlighted the main areas as: • Whilst you now know that you have more compliance on ensuring written feedback is happening, what are the next steps on quality of the feedback and understanding the positive impact this is having on learner progress? • The first thing we are doing is to focus on the quality of written feedback, to reiterate what our expectations are around that written feedback, in particular the spelling, punctuation, and grammar aspects of the Reaseheath Way of feedback. We have delivered CPD on this across all curriculum areas and this is supported by the teaching and learning leads. The next step is to implement digital solutions to support quality of feedback – initially using a tool called Markus in English and maths. We are also monitoring student progress and assessments, which will be the evidence that the improvements have had impact. • How will we know as governors that what you are doing has been successful? • Ultimately, it will be about whether the feedback is more useful for the learner which will show in data like whether we are seeing improvements in high grades achievement. • The improvement actions on quality of learning support required more work at the last meeting, what is the impact of this work now? • There is new leadership in this area, and we are seeing positive data. Good progress and strong retention for EHCP learners this year. We are confident of positive impact but just a bit behind ideally where we'd like to be to be able to evidence that. • On ITE provision how does the performance compare with national rates? • Achievement compares very well against the national rate and doing very well in terms of high grades. • How are new teachers supported when they first join the college? • New teachers will not teach in those first 3 weeks and then from that it's tapered, and we start off with team teaching, and we slowly integrate them into the classroom, with reduced teaching loads. This can be a challenge when staffing capacity is an issue, but we believe it is the best way to prepare and retain new teachers and support the best experience for learners. • What are the key challenges with the ITE provision? Because we have so many inexperienced, unqualified staff joining us from industry, the need to provide all new teaching staff with experienced mentors is the biggest challenge. • A governor link to the ITE provision was suggested and agreed with Jane Cowell volunteering to take up this role. ACTION

	- Feedback on governor link visits to areas was shared. One governor reflected that he had not had the chance to see enough teaching and learning in action in one of the key areas – agriculture – and this was agreed to be supported by an additional visit in the summer term, supported by the new staff governor. ACTION. - One governor reflected that her experience had been very positive, and she had seen a wide range of learning support in action across different curriculum areas which was very positive in her view. As the link governor for SEND she felt very assured from her link visit that the students with additional needs were very well supported.
3.3	RESOLVED: The meeting took assurance that progress is being made on the quality of written feedback, the quality of learning support in lessons and that the quality of the ITE provision is strong, but there are challenges in providing sufficient mentor support with so many new teachers.
4.	TOR4 Monitor performance: Teaching and learning activity, student retention, achievement, attendance, destinations/monitor KPI
4.1	The meeting received reporting from the Assistant Principal on progress against the Quality Improvement Plan actions and KPI at this stage in the academic year, with EHCP/High Needs/Residential data shown separately. The KPI for Further Education and Apprenticeships remain on track and above the initial target. The key data reported was: - Overall retention for all aims that are reportable in 25/26 in the national Qualification Achievement Rates (QAR) methodology, is currently 95.62% against a KPI target of 91.00%. Retention at the same point last year was 92.30%. - Overall retention for core aims including T levels, that are due to finish in 25/26, is currently 92.09% against a KPI target of 87.00%. Retention at the end of last year for core aims was 82.00%. - The retention rates for those with an EHCP or high needs is above the College average, along with residential students aged 16 and 17 years-old and those with an EHCP. - In Apprenticeships, overall achievement rates (OAR) have a maximum possible outturn of 74.74% for 2025-26, against an end of year KPI of 70%. - Overall attendance for core aims is currently 90.92% against a KPI target of 93.00%. The attendance rates for those with EHCPs, high needs or residential is slightly below the College average. Attendance for English and maths is currently 77.08%, which is significantly below the College target of 85.00%. - Overall student satisfaction continues to be high, following the Pulse 2 survey results. 91.46% of students would recommend the College, compared to 88.72% at the same point last year. Students studying in Equine, Construction and the Academy of Land and Environment (ALE) have satisfaction below the College average. 94.62% of apprentices and 92% of employers report that they are satisfied with their overall apprenticeship experience (279 and 166 respondents respectively). Each are above the KPI target of 90%. - The proportion of lessons that meet expectations is currently 85.23%, with 34.09% meeting 'teaching excellence' and 14.77% in scope for a reobservation. 13 teachers are currently monitored at the Performance Committee.
4.2	RESOLVED: The reporting indicates positive progress and welcomed improvements in the data reporting as more useful for governors, with assurance that in future actual attendance will be reported.

5.	TOR 7 - Review committee risk remit – report to Audit Committee
5.1	RESOLVED: The committee reported Reasonable assurance on the management of the risk to quality of student outcomes and student experience, with this risk exposure within tolerable level, but it highlighted the challenges around mentoring on teacher training given the imminent offset inspection and further evidence needed of improvement impact around the quality of learning support.
6.	TOR8 Policy Approvals
6.1	RESOLVED: The reviewed Compliments and Complaints Policy FE and apprenticeships was approved.
7.	Governance
7.1	RESOLVED: The meeting had covered its remit against its against terms of reference and cycle of business for this meeting with actions noted for the next meeting.
8.	Closing items
8.1	There was one item of other business raised: A governor highlighted the need to implement the lock down drills. The Vice Principal confirmed that this was planned for the staff development day in June and then to be rolled out with students from the new academic year. Feedback from governors was that this a priority and needed to be implemented as soon as possible, as the audibant system has been in place since summer 2025. The Vice Principal confirmed that whilst a drill has not yet been carried out, staff and students have lockdown guidance, and he would set out a more defined timeline for the lockdown drills in the next safeguarding update. ACTION.
8.2	The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday 7 May at 2pm, with learning walks in the morning.

The meeting closed at 12.00pm

Approved as a correct record 7 May 2026

Mike Gorton, Chair