

SPARSHOLT COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE
held on 27 November 2025 at 09:30
at Sparsholt College Campus

¹PRESENT G Baker (C)²; Courtney Kearney (St); J Loretto (E)² (except minutes 72-85); J Milburn (P); R Palmer (E); H Perry (S); A Rowley (E) (Chair); C Wilson (C)

In attendance: H Mitchell, Apprenticeship Manager (minutes 80 to 89)
K Payne, Assistant Principal English & Maths (minutes 90 to 95)
R Price, Director of Learning & Quality
C Rapley, Assistant Principal HE (minutes 96 to 106)
B Stokes, Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover)
M Treagust, Vice Principal Curriculum (Sparsholt)
S Willson, Head of Corporate Governance

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

131. The Committee Chair welcomed C Kearney to her first meeting at FE Student Governor (Andover).
132. Apologies were received from N Moody. The Committee Chair noted that N Moody was stepping down as a governor in December and recorded thanks to N Moody for his contribution to the work of the committee.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

133. There were no interests to declare.

MINUTES

134. **Resolved** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.
135. Wi-Fi coverage (minute 64/25): The Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover) provided an update on the timescale for the remaining works to upgrade Wi-Fi coverage at the Andover campus.
136. Qualification accreditation (70/25): The committee noted that full accreditation for the FdSc Veterinary Nursing Science had been confirmed by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in June 2025 and had been notified to the committee by email.
137. SEND support (83/25): The committee noted the appointment of a new High Needs Manager and her work with curriculum teams, as well as sharing of good practice between curriculum areas, including in relation to planning and delivery of practical sessions.

¹ (C) = Co-opted; (E) = External; (P) = Principal; (S) = Staff; (St) = Student

² Via online video conference

138. Apprenticeships (86/25): The Vice Principal Curriculum (Sparsholt) reported issues with the availability of end point assessments (EPAs) which was one of the factors impacting apprenticeship achievement rates.
139. Ofsted FE & Skills Inspection Toolkit tool (102 & 104/25): The committee noted that the Curriculum Delivery, Teaching & Learning, and Quality Improvement Strategy had been further updated with the approval of the Board to adopt the final version of Ofsted’s judgement terminology. Members reported and discussed feedback from pilots of the new inspection regime.
140. Staff survey (212/25): The Principal explained the intention to remove two learner-related questions from the staff survey going forward in order that the survey focused on the staff experience and assured the committee that these aspects of the learner experience would be monitored and reported via alternative mechanisms.
141. The committee noted that the resolutions of the committee had been implemented and that there were no other matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLAN

142. The committee had received the report of the Head of Corporate Governance proposing the committee’s forward business plan for 2025-26, following the outcomes of the committee’s performance review in June and discussions with the Committee Chair and SLT.
143. The plan included continued enhanced scrutiny of English & Maths and an annual review of the use of AI in teaching and learning and introduced reports on the parts of the University Centre Sparsholt (UCS) Strategic Plan and Access & Participation Plan (APP) relevant to the committee’s remit. Reporting would also include Initial Teacher Education which would be covered by the new Ofsted inspection regime from January 2026.
144. It was noted that the proposed Q&S business plan aligns with the AoC Code of Good Governance recommended practices and sources of assurance as relevant to the committee’s remit.
145. **Resolved** – that the committee’s forward business plan for 2025-26 be approved.

OFSTED RESIDENTIAL

146. The committee had received Ofsted’s residential provision inspection report, together with a report for context from the Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover).
147. Ofsted had judged as ‘outstanding’ the overall experience and progress of young people, as well as how well young people are helped and protected and the effectiveness of leaders and managers, and the committee commended the ambition and work of the teams involved and the leadership of the Director of Inclusion & Student Experience, Vice Principal and Principal.
148. The committee also welcomed the recognition of the college’s commitment to inclusion and wellbeing, and the benefits of members of staff continuing to be open to learning and working with external agencies to keep their knowledge up-to-date.
149. The Vice Principal noted that the inspectors had recognised the evidence of governance having a positive impact on the student experience and thanked the Committee Chair and Chair of Governors for their participation in the inspection.

FURTHER EDUCATION

FE Self- Assessment Report and College Improvement Plan

150. The committee had received the college's draft FE Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2024-25 and FE College Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2025-26, together with an accompanying report from the Director of Learning & Quality and the Vice Principals Curriculum.
151. The Director of Learning & Quality drew the committee's attention to the process which had been followed this year in developing the SAR, and thanked members of the Board who had attended curriculum area SAR review meetings earlier in the academic year.
152. The committee reviewed the findings of the SAR, noting that the self-assessed headline grades followed the format of the previous Ofsted inspection framework (which was in place during 2024-25) and that the college had self-assessed as Good with many Outstanding features. The committee was assured that any curriculum areas which had seen a decline in the grade assessment from the previous year were a focus of actions set out in the new CIP.
153. Members probed a range of aspects of the SAR during discussion, including in relation to:
 - Commending the continuing ambition to reach 90% achievement in all curriculum areas;
 - Seeking assurance about the mechanisms in place to support the wellbeing and skills development of teaching staff and curriculum leaders in areas where specific challenges had been identified,
 - Questioning the factors which had informed the grade assessments in addition to achievement data (such as the quality of teaching and learning, student surveys, leadership and management, cohort size, and variation in achievement at different levels of qualifications within the same curriculum area);
 - Welcoming the development of a leadership development programme for curriculum leaders, as well as opportunity to share best practice on specific topics at meetings and evidence of ownership of the course self-assessment reports (CoSARs) by the curriculum leaders;
 - The correlation between attendance and achievement;
 - The value of the detailed data analysis in revealing and evidencing nuances in performance between different learner groups and enabling targeted support for disadvantaged learners.
154. The committee asked the Director of Quality & Learning to review whether any further signposting could be added to the data tables in future SARs to contextualise it in a way which made the assessment of each area more transparent to the committee.
155. The Apprenticeship Manager reported the headline analysis of factors underpinning a decline in apprenticeship achievement data, with the end of year outcome being lower than the previous forecast reported to the committee, explaining the range of reasons for apprenticeship withdrawals and the impact of delayed EPAs or EPA resits. The Apprenticeship Manager assured the committee that the team continued to have good relationships with employers and would work with employers on actions going forward.
156. The committee acknowledged that the outcome was disappointing and welcomed the clear commitment to a full review being undertaken by management to ensure that the causes

were understood and that actions were put in place, including in relation to mitigating the risk of withdrawals, limiting delays caused by EPAs capacity, and enhancing management systems. Progress would be reported to and scrutinised by the committee to provide assurance to the Board.

157. The committee commended the rigor and scope of the proposed CIP to drive improvements in teaching, learning assessment and overall outcomes across FE, noting that it had been redesigned to align with the new Ofsted inspection toolkit. Inclusive teaching practice was a goal in all teaching areas, not only in Foundation, and the CIP also specifically addressed actions in relation to disadvantaged learners.
158. The committee also noted the findings of two recent quality reviews conducted for the college – an External Quality Review of ‘progress and questioning’ and the latest Landex Peer Review which focused on high needs and inclusion. Both had been positive overall and had identified several actions to support further improvements.
159. **Resolved** – that the committee recommend to the Board of Governors that the Self-Assessment Report 2024-25 (SAR) provided a satisfactory basis on which to judge the quality of the FE and apprenticeship performance and quality improvement targets, and that the SAR and the associated College Improvement Plan (CIP) 2025-26 be approved by the Board.

Maths and English

160. The committee had received for review and assurance the report of the Assistant Principal English & Maths and the Vice Principals on progress with the performance action plan in place for English and Maths.
161. The committee recognised the significant progress achieved in 2024-25, in particular the percentage of learners achieving GCSE grade 4 in or above in English and Maths had increased on both campuses, albeit that the Sparsholt data was slightly below the ambitious strategic targets. Overall, the number of GCSEs at grade 4 or above during 2024-25 was 173 for English and 152 for Maths which represented a significant impact for a large number of learners who could then progress in their chosen pathways.
162. The committee also noted the analysis of outcomes in relation to functional skills qualifications and levels 1 and 2.
163. Responding to members questions about which management actions had been successful and the priorities for 2025-26, the Assistant Principal highlighted a number of points, including the correlation between attendance and achievement, supporting learners academic revision and exam preparation, contextualising Maths and English with content related to the learners’ main study programme, effective use of teaching and learning observations to develop staff, and building a positive staff culture and collaboration between English and Maths and curriculum area teams. The Assistant Principal believe the principles were common to both campuses but recognised that some variation in practices was required because of the difference in the timetable.
164. The Principal highlighted the strategic investment which had previously been made with the backing of the Board to restructure and resourcing of the English and Maths team, which had enabled the delivery of the actions underpinning the improvement performance.

165. The committee was satisfied to report to the Board that the factors underlying the performance of English and Maths were clearly understood by management and were continuing to be addressed by the college as a priority.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Quality Performance

166. The committee had received for scrutiny and assurance the progress report of the Vice Principal & Dean of Higher Education (HE) on the quality of HE provision and the HE student experience, including National Student Survey (NSS) results, together with a presentation from the Assistant Principal HE on the Office for Students (OfS) proposals for changes to quality regulation and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).
167. Discussing the OfS proposals, the committee recognised that there were some potentially significant risks linked to a TEF assessment below Gold or Silver under the new framework given that the proposals linked the outcome to the ability to raise tuition fees and to restrictions on student number growth.
168. The committee noted that UCS and other similarly sized HE providers were responding to the consultation to challenge the disproportionate impact that a very small numbers of students can have on data, such as NSS results. The committee also recognised the need to identify mitigating actions and that that there would be a time lag before the results of actions were seen in the data.
169. Members discussed the detail of the NSS data analysis, acknowledging areas of strong performance and seeking views from the Assistant Principal HE about the underlying factors and related actions for areas which performed less strongly.
170. The committee noted that the OfS proposals were out for consultation until 11 December 2025, with a second stage consultation on detailed methodology and revisions to conditions B3 and B6 expected in autumn 2026. Under current OfS proposals, the earliest UCS would be assessed would be in 2027/28.
171. The committee also reviewed the performance data for Condition B3, noting that the continuation and completion data for 2024-25 confirmed that quality thresholds had been met and the challenge that the Graduates Outcomes survey currently presented due to the way in which graduate jobs were classified.

University Centre Sparsholt Strategic Plan

172. The committee had received and reviewed the progress report from the Vice Principal & Dean of HE on delivery of the UCS Strategic Plan 2025-2030 in relation to the strategic objectives under the remit of the committee.
173. The committee noted that, at this early point in the reporting cycle, the actions appeared to be on track, with examples given of implementation.

University Centre Sparsholt Access & Participation Plan

174. The committee had received and reviewed the progress report from the Vice Principal & Dean of HE on delivery of the UCS APP 2025-2030 in relation to the priorities under the remit of the committee.
175. The Assistant Principal HE confirmed to the committee that the actions shown in the report as 'not yet started' were still on track to be delivered and that he and the Dean of HE were content with progress at this point of the year.
176. Responding to the Committee Chair's challenge as to whether the interventions in the plan relating to 'improving mental health' were being delivered in a timely manner in order to mitigate against the risks of students withdrawing from their course, the Assistant Principal HE confirmed the actions which had been delivered in preparation for the start of the year and the Principal explained further work relating to the new intake for 2026/27.

COLLEGE GROUP POLICIES & REPORTS

Prevent Duty

177. The committee noted that the college's FE and HE Prevent Duty Risk Assessment/Action Plan had been updated and scrutinised by the Wellbeing Committee.
178. The Vice Principal Curriculum (Andover), the SLT Prevent Duty lead, provided a summary of key updates and noted that a full lockdown practice would be held on both campuses.
179. The committee noted that the Prevent Duty Risk Assessment would be received by the Board for assurance that the risks associated with Prevent has been identified and that college management had implemented controls and actions to mitigate these risks.

(Note: the updated Prevent Duty Risk Assessment was circulated to the committee after the meeting for review and comment.)

Healthcheck Report

180. The committee had received and reviewed the latest Healthcheck (KPIs) report (2025/26- Issue 03).
181. The committee probed the latest staff vacancy data in relation to teaching and learning and were assured that the overall picture was positive, albeit that there were a small number of vacancies for specialist lecturer/instructor roles and that the growth in learner with SEND needs and related funding resulted in continuing recruitment of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs).
182. The committee also sought additional assurance about the latest learner conduct and performance data and welcomed the evidence of standards of expected behaviour being set early in the academic year. The Student Governor also shared her experience of the communal spaces around the Andover campus feeling calmer.
183. The meeting concluded at 12:30.

Approved: Quality & Standards Committee Meeting 12 February 2026