

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2025 AT 17.30 VIA TEAMS

Present:

Mr Stuart Harper (Chair)
Mrs Lee Campbell (Principal / Chief Executive)
Dr Laura Milner
Dr Thomas Moore
Mrs Hilary Singleton
Mrs Angela Whiteside
Dr Liz Finnigan

In Attendance:

Ms Libby Shackels, Director of Curriculum
Mrs Elaine Nesbitt, (Acting Assistant Director HE and Quality)
Mrs Fiona Bradley (Assistant Director FE and Training)
Ms Lynne Ervine (Project Based Learning Officer)
Mrs Tracy Rice (Head of Business Engagement)
Mrs Emma Foster, Acting Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.36

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Mr James Hutchinson.
Mr S Harper welcomed Ms E Foster to the Education Committee.

A02. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the commencement of the meeting interests held in any matter to be discussed. No interests were declared.

A03. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 04 DECEMBER 2024

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the last meeting held on 04 December 2024. The minutes were checked for accuracy.

The minutes were unanimously approved following a proposal from Mrs Singleton and seconded by Dr Milner

A04. MATTERS ARISING

Ms Shackels gave a brief update on how work is being undertaken around Artificial Intelligence (A.I) and how its currently being developed as part of the Curriculum Strategy.

Mrs Campbell informed the meeting that work is ongoing to develop the Curriculum Strategy.

Dr Milner confirmed the Safeguarding Policy is now with the DfE for approval.

Action by whom

Mr Harper advised members that the Assistant Director of Student Services will provide a Safeguarding update to the next Education Committee annually in June 2025.

Mrs Campbell requested the responsible officer on the Action be amended to college staff with responsibility for the actions.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Mr Harper informed the meeting that he had recently attended Effective Governance training and confirmed he will be attending the College's Higher Education Graduation Ceremony in August 2025.

He informed members that this evening's meeting will focus on two areas, firstly, Artificial Intelligence and how the college plans to incorporate this into the teaching and learning. Secondly, on the work of the college's Business Support and Innovation Unit with a focus on external engagement and innovation and building relationships with industry.

Mr Harper highlighted the recent Traineeship Evaluation which took place in January 2025 which was very successful and advised members the college received very positive feedback..

Finally, he informed the meeting that the Whole College Quality Improvement Plan has now been submitted, and he will attend the feedback session in due course.

A06. POLICY APPROVAL

- Student Charter
- Safeguarding Policy

Members noted minor amendments to the policies, noting these were the standard annual updates.

The policies were unanimously approved following a proposal from Dr Finnigan and seconded by Dr Milner

A07. Teaching and Learning- Digital Technology Presentation

Ms Ervine delivered a presentation on the development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) framework within the college, including how this is being embedded within the curriculum.

Ms Ervine informed the committee that a new Project Based Learning (PBL) portal was developed within the college for release later this year.

Members discussed the presentation and raised a number of questions.

Dr Moore and Mr Harper thanked Ms Ervine for her presentation.

Ms Ervine thanked the members for the opportunity to share this presentation.

Ms Ervine left the meeting at 18:28

A08. EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT PRESENTATION

Mrs Rice delivered a presentation on the college's ongoing External Engagement work and the work of the Business Support and Innovation Team are undertaking with local businesses.

Mrs Rice informed the meeting that currently the college has 25 projects across the North and South of Ireland.

Mrs Rice highlighted the work that External Engagement is undertaking to support social inclusion through programmes such as Step-Up and Employ Me.

Focusing on the success of Higher-Level Apprenticeships, Mrs Rice outlined the significant number of apprentices who had been supported into employment over the last 10 years and provided members with information regarding the how the college portal.

Members discussed the presentation and raised a number of questions.

Dr Moore thanked Mrs Rice for her excellent presentation and requested a meeting with her and her team to find out more about the external engagement projects the college is currently working on.

Mrs E Foster

Mr Harper thanked Mrs Rice and her team for the hard work done on behalf of college

Mrs Rice left the meeting at 19:05.

Ms Shackels also thanked Ms Ervine and Mrs Rice for their contributions.

A09. WHOLE COLLEGE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE (WCQIP)

Ms Shackels gave an update to the members on the Whole College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

She informed the members that the college is still awaiting feedback from the Department on the 2024-25 QIP. However, she did state that both documents are live working documents and are monitored and reviewed regularly.

Mr Harper thanked Ms Shackels and confirmed feedback is expected by April 2025.

A10. ETI TRAINEESHIP EVALUATION UPDATE

Mrs Shackels drew members attention to the link included in the agenda , that provided a statistical summary of Traineeships at a sector level for the academic year 2023-24. Ms Shackels provided a verbal comparison of that summary with college provision. Stating that the college is the second largest provider of Traineeships, provision is open to all learners irrespective of background or age and that the college provides both 1- and 2-year Traineeships.

Ms Shackels concluded by stating that student satisfaction with the Traineeship programme was verified by ETI through their questionnaire and focus group meetings with Trainees during the Evaluation visit.

Mr Harper thanked Ms Shackels for the update.

A11. CURRICULUM DIRECTOR'S WORKING GROUP (CDWG)

Ms Shackels provided the committee with a short overview of the work of the Curriculum Directors including: following up on the actions from the ETI Traineeship Evaluation, attending, with Mrs Campbell, the recent ETB Conference in Sligo, ongoing engagement with the four nations on Micro-credentials and attendance at the annual Quality Improvement Show Case Event in Stormont on the 6th March.

A12. NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY UPDATE

Ms Shackels informed the members that currently 39% of students have responded to the survey which is up slightly on last year. Weekly updates are provided and a benchmark of 71% has been established

A13. CIRCULARS

Ms Shackels drew members attention to the two links and provided a short summary on both.

Mr Harper thanked Ms Shackels for the update.

A14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Nothing raised.

A15. REVIEW OF THE MEETING

Mr Harper enquired if Members were satisfied with how the meeting was conducted and asked Members if they had any suggestions on improvements.

Dr Moore congratulated Ms Ervine and Mrs Rice on their presentations given at the meeting.

Mrs Singleton said the new thematic approach to the committee meetings is very positive.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Mr Harper thanked Members for their attendance.

The next meeting of the Education Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 03 June 2025 at 18.30 in Boardroom Newry Campus.

Dr Finnigan, Mrs Bradley and Mrs Nesbitt left the meeting at 19.27

The meeting concluded at 19:27



CHAIR

3rd June 2025
DATE



