

Minutes  
Curriculum Strategy & Quality Enhancement Committee  
HRUC Governance

Date	23/10/2025	
Time	17:30 - 19:30	
Location	Microsoft Teams	
Governors	Mike Sutcliffe Jo Swindells Mario Michaelides Jenny McLaughlin Sofia Barbosa Boucas	Chair Vice-chair Governor Governor Governor
Staff	Tieran Morton	
Governors	Gary May	
In Attendance	Paul Miller	Chair Strategic Transformation Committee
Officers	Keith Smith Dylan McTaggart (DM) Clive Hodge Gavin Hughes (GH) Jo Withers Asif Khan	CEO, Ex-Officio HRUC Group Executive Principal Harrow College Principal Richmond College Principal Chief of Business Strategy Assistant Principal - IoT, Engineering and Technologies
Absent	Vincent Neate Cherry Horton-Edwards	Governor Staff Governor
Clerk	Clare Mitchell	
Note Taker	Nataliia Tymkiv	

Minutes

---

**1 - General Disclaimer at the Start of the Meeting**

The meeting was recorded for the purpose of minuting. No objections were raised.

**2 – Apologies for absence**

CH-E had sent her apologies, VN was absent from the meeting.

**3 - Declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**4 - Minutes of the meetings on 7 May and 26 June 2025**

**Resolution: The two sets of minutes of the previous CSQE meetings - 7 May and 26 June 2025 - were unanimously approved.**

## 5 - Action List

The Committee received a report outlining progress against actions from the previous meetings held on 7 May and 26 June 2025. Several actions were confirmed as completed, with the remainder either in progress or scheduled for later in the year.

The Committee noted an update regarding the West London Institute of Technology (WLIoT) following discussions at the Strategic Transformation Committee. The IoT brand would be retained for use in future bids and specialist curriculum activity, though it would no longer be promoted as a primary growth area. The Committee discussed the change in emphasis, noting that the focus had shifted from standalone investment to integration within wider college operations. Members questioned whether this revised approach could limit future opportunities should national policy or funding priorities change. It was confirmed that the position would remain under review in line with future strategic developments.

The Committee acknowledged the progress and clarity on the action items.

## 6 - Committee Self-Assessment

Members would be sent a questionnaire to complete as part of the self-assessment process. The Committee's terms of reference would be circulated with the questionnaire. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to evaluate and improve the Committee's performance.

**Action: CSQE committee members to respond to the self-assessment questionnaire.**

## 7 - State of the Nation

The Committee received a report outlining the current policy landscape and its impact on curriculum and quality. The presentation focused on learner experience and the ambition to be recognised as the *College of Choice*, aligned with the Curriculum Strategy 2030 and the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper.

The Committee noted that the College's self-assessment for 2024/25 was being undertaken against the current Ofsted framework, with planning for 2025/26 informed by the new inspection framework and embedded in a new Quality and Ambition Plan (QAP). The Committee noted that the majority of the priorities in the new white paper were already integrated into the Curriculum Strategy Road Map. There were areas which would need further development e.g. the focus on greater opportunities for NEETs. There might also need to be changes to the adult offer in the light of the white paper. Implementation of the curriculum strategy would need to be through the lens of the priorities in the white paper. Alignment with the white paper would be considered as part of the refresh of the strategic plan which would be considered by Governors in early 2026.

**Action: Refresh of strategic plan with Governors – early 2026 - KS**

The Committee received an update on external funding. £216k of Skills Bootcamp funding had been secured by the College to upskill health and care staff and a new GLA Adult Talent Pathways fund had been announced. Engagement with such schemes would be employer led.

An update was also provided on the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE), which would be rolled out nationally from January 2027. 30-credit modular units in construction, engineering,

health and social care, and digital and AI were being developed so the College could access this funding once it became available.

The Committee noted that the College achieved Good with Outstanding features in its November 2024 Ofsted inspection, one year ahead of its target. DM confirmed that the College remained on track to improve its Ofsted rating further, with continuing progress in achievement, quality and learner outcomes.

Governors discussed the implications of the new Ofsted inspection framework, which required consistently high performance across all criteria. Pilot inspections using the new framework had produced more mid-range grades and it was still unclear how the new framework would be applied nationally.

The Committee noted that income had increased across most areas, falling only in adult provision due to national funding pressures. Contribution margins remained strong for 16-18 learners, SEND, HE and apprenticeships. Achievement across HRUC reached 88%, with campus outcomes of 85% at Richmond, 88% at Harrow and 89% at Uxbridge, representing a second consecutive record year. Performance was particularly strong for 16-18 learners, SEND and HE (97.5%), while areas for improvement included attendance, English and maths for high-needs learners at Richmond, and elements of adult provision. Apprenticeship achievement was improving. Further work was needed to increase the numbers of existing students progressing into apprenticeships with the College.

#### **Action: Governors to receive training on the new Ofsted framework - DM**

The Committee discussed the report.

### **8 - Emerging strengths and areas for improvement (AFIs) - 2024/25 SAR**

The Committee discussed the emerging findings from the draft 2024/25 Self-Assessment Report (SAR). Early outcomes indicated *Outstanding* performance for programmes for young people, with other areas graded *Good with Outstanding features*. DM reported that he had discussed these gradings with the Vice-Chair of the Committee.

The Committee noted that personal development and behaviour and attitudes were judged *Outstanding* at inspection. Since then learner-enrichment framework had expanded from the *Big Three* (guest speaker, trip, enrichment activity) to the “Big Four”, now including work experience (WEX).

The Committee queried whether previous issues with work-experience processes had been resolved. The Executive confirmed that although there were still some inconsistencies between curriculum areas a strengthened WEX team was now in place and WEX activity was closely tracked through local and cross-college quality meetings.

A governor queried why the report stated that a minority of 19+ learners were not achieving their potential. The Executive reported that 19+ achievement stood at 77%, around 4 points below the HRUC average, largely due to under-performance in new ESOL delivery at Richmond. That provision has been withdrawn following reductions in adult funding. AAT accounting had been withdrawn. At Uxbridge, a minor dip in adult ESOL achievement - still above national averages - was attributed to staffing issues that had now been resolved.

The timescale for improving timely apprenticeship achievement was also queried. Timely achievement had improved by 22 percentage points from the previous year. This was as a

result of stronger monitoring and employer engagement. The remainder of those apprentices who had not completed on time were on longer-duration programmes such as electrical and construction. These students were being supported and timely completion would continue to improve over the next two years. Timely completion also impacted financial contribution, which was being closely monitored.

The Committee discussed the effect of curriculum growth on overall outcomes. It was noted that approximately 50% of learners were now enrolled at Level 3, which increased delivery complexity but aligned with the College's strategy to expand technical and professional pathways.

Governors supported the direction of travel and recognised the continued focus on the quality of provision and outcomes that was required as the College developed more complex and higher-level provision.

The Committee noted that the SAR and emerging AFIs was presented for information and early awareness only. The draft would be finalised once national Individual Learner Record (ILR) data was released and brought to the Committee in December 2025 prior to submission to Corporation.

**Action: The full SAR and QAP to be presented to this Committee at its next meeting prior to submission to Corporation.**

The Committee discussed the report.

## **9 - Road Map for Delivering the Curriculum Strategy**

The Committee received a presentation from DM outlining the road map for delivering the Curriculum Strategy 2030, which was ratified by the Corporation in July 2025. The road map set out the high level milestones for implementing the curriculum strategy, focusing initially on band 1 subjects including the three growth areas identified as priorities by the Strategic Transformation Committee; construction, health and aviation.

A strategic outline case and financial business case approach would be used to test the credibility, costs and sequencing of options. DM assured the Committee that beneath this high-level plan there was a detailed milestone document with named leads and champions for each area. Steering groups would undertake benchmarking with employers and independent training providers to inform scope and delivery.

The first phase, covering scope and discovery, was aligned with the Estates Masterplan currently being developed by the COO, with a baseline report expected by February 2026. Implementation dates would be added once the option-testing phase is complete.

The Committee discussed the three proposed growth areas and noted that construction, health and aviation were already priority subjects, with existing assets already fully optimised. Class sizes and workshop timetables had been maximised, and a small block at Uxbridge had been remodelled to expand construction delivery. Partnerships at Heathrow continued to support aviation provision. Enrolments in construction had increased but capacity limited further growth. Options for modular accommodation were being explored as a means of providing extra capacity in the short term.

The Committee emphasised the need for establishing clear governance boundaries for the implementation of the Curriculum Strategy, recognising that this Committee determined curriculum strategy while the Strategic Transformation Committee's role was to monitor oversight of its delivery. It was agreed that alignment between the two Committees would be

essential. Governors highlighted the importance of maintaining pace and identifying quick wins, particularly within construction, while ensuring that delivery remains achievable and fully costed.

A governor questioned how the road map reflected the College's annual Quality & Ambition Plan (QAP) and how it would link to improvements in participation, attendance, behaviour and enrichment. DM indicated that the link would be through the College's 'Corporate Goals' document, which tracked achievement for at-risk cohorts such as those with safeguarding and mental-health issues and looked-after learners, as well as those without Level 2 English and Maths. It was noted that these groups achieved within 1% of the overall achievement rate in the previous year, with further improvement expected in the current year.

The Committee discussed the importance of integrating staff development and infrastructure into the delivery plan, ensuring that the workforce had the skills to use new technology and teaching environments effectively. The Committee recognised the finite monetary and change-management capacity available and emphasised the need for prioritisation and sequencing of workstreams. Governors reinforced the importance of focusing improvement efforts where they will have the greatest impact and adopting a model of marginal gains to drive sustainable progress across the majority of the College's provision.

The Executive acknowledged the feedback and confirmed that steering groups would include wider staff participation to ensure benchmarking and professional input from relevant curriculum specialists. It was emphasised that understanding and scoping must precede delivery and that while there may be pressure to accelerate timelines, accuracy and clarity must remain the priority. A suggestion for small-scale piloting of new approaches before full implementation was supported.

The Committee asked for the road map to be revised to reflect the feedback received and resubmitted for review. The Chair and PM offered to work with DM offline to refine the next version prior to its return to the Committee.

**Action: Curriculum road map be revised to reflect the feedback received and resubmitted to the Committee for review – DM, MS, PM**

## **10 - Higher Education Update**

The Committee received a report on HE performance for 2024/25, current status and forward planning. The overall achievement rate for HE was 97.5%, with Institute of Technology subjects (engineering, computing and construction) at 99.5%. Continuation and retention remained high and student satisfaction had improved.

Recruitment was currently just under target for 2025/26, with digital/computing 18 learners below target. This would be mitigated by a February 2026 start cohort and infilling part-time learners to existing modules. New AI programmes had recruited to target and were available to part-time learners. The HE offer in construction was being revised to make it more attractive to learners for 2026/27 with a focus on part-time civil engineering and green provision, employer upskilling, and progression from a larger Level 3 construction cohort into HE.

Part-time fees would reduce to £3,500 in 2026/27, offset by an increase in full-time fees to around £6,800, with financial modelling confirming viability. The Committee challenged whether lowering part-time fees was financially sustainable. Management confirmed that the financial modelling supported the change, with the full-time fee increase and efficiency measures offsetting the reduction in the part time fee.

**Action: Undertake additional due diligence on the financial viability to provide assurance that a fully costed model has been used – AK, with support from the Executive.**

The Committee received assurance that HE provision was fully compliant with the OfS conditions of registration A-E. All HE staff completed sexual-harassment training in July 2025 ahead of the new term and the student offer had been updated; the website has been updated accordingly.

Expansion plans included additional Level 5 and Level 6 pathways, strengthened partnerships, and development of a branded HE Centre as a medium-term objective, with degree-awarding powers as a longer-term ambition.

The Committee asked for further information on the possibility of a branded HE Centre. The Executive explained that detailed scoping was in progress. A governor asked how capacity and academic governance would be developed if the College offered HE courses at Level 6. The Executive outlined plans for CPD for staff, progression pathways, and the development of an HE structure to support growth.

The Committee received a strategic update on sector changes, noting the White Paper direction toward single regulation at Level 4 and above by OfS and potential future flexibilities for self-accreditation under LLE. It was noted that Pearson remained the predominant awarding body for HNC/HND at Levels 4–5 across several disciplines, with self-developed HTQs a longer-term possibility once requirements were clearer. The Committee recognised the opportunity to shape a distinctive HE model in partnership with universities, aligned to LLE, while managing capacity constraints and sequencing decisions through the forthcoming strategic alignment work.

The Committee noted the update.

## **11 - Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report 2024/25**

The Committee received the Safeguarding and Prevent Annual Report for 2024/25. This was presented by GH as the Designated Safeguarding Lead for HRUC. There had been a significant increase in safeguarding cases across HRUC, reflecting both growth in student numbers and wider societal pressures. The leading categories remained domestic abuse and mental-health related concerns, while neglect had fallen and child exploitation had increased. Ofsted had confirmed that the College “fully meets” its statutory duties in relation to safeguarding at inspection in November 2024.

Governors discussed the proportional rise in safeguarding cases relative to student growth. It was clarified that safeguarding growth had outpaced overall enrolment, indicating higher underlying demand. The Committee questioned whether current resources and staff expertise were sufficient to meet the rising need, particularly in relation to mental-health support. GH confirmed that staffing levels and specialist training had been expanded, but that pressures on counselling and mental-health services remained due to high volumes and limited external provision.

Governors requested assurance that safeguarding capacity remained adequate across HRUC and that potential risks were identified early. The Committee also asked GH to explore comparative benchmarking with other colleges to help contextualise data. GH explained that while it might be possible to obtain some comparative data through

relationships with other local Colleges, comparative safeguarding data was not published and was difficult to obtain because of its sensitivity.

The Committee emphasised the importance of maintaining statutory compliance and appropriate support for all students, not only those in the highest-risk categories.

The Committee discussed the report.

**Action: Provide a formal assessment of safeguarding capacity and provide assurance that statutory and wider student needs are being met across HRUC**

**Action: Explore the possibility of obtaining comparative safeguarding data through relationships with other local Colleges**

## **12 - Any other business**

There were no additional items of business

## **13 - Date of next meeting**

- 4 December 2025