

**Minutes of the meeting of the SOUTH BANK COLLEGES Quality and Improvement Committee
held on Tuesday 17 June 2025 4-6pm
Lambeth College Board Room**

Present

Sue Dare (Chair)
Issa Issa (*until item 12*)
Thesia Kouloungou

Apologies

Nyla-Rae Graham

In attendance

Anna Bazeos, Committee Secretary
Clare Dignum, Director of Teaching & Learning
Adebayo Emanuel, Bids & Partnership Manager (*for item 14*)
Deborah Johnston, Pro Vice Chancellor Education
Fiona Morey, Executive Principal
Elaine Smith, Director of Student Engagement and Well-being
Wayne Wright, Principal LSBTC

1. Chair's Business

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The above apologies were noted.

2. Declarations of Interest

No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 13 January 2025.

4. Matters arising

The Committee reviewed the outstanding action table and confirmed that all items were either completed or included on the current agenda, except for one relating to the 24/25 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, which was deferred to the next academic year.

The Committee revisited the student survey results previously discussed, which had identified lower satisfaction with Learning Resource Centres (LRCs), Additional Learning Support, and online safety. They inquired about progress made since. The LSBTC Principal reported that a second survey had been completed and a full analysis would be presented to the Board in

July.

It was noted that many students misunderstood the purpose of LRCs, contributing to the lower satisfaction scores. The Executive acknowledged previous staffing reductions due to financial constraints but confirmed that additional staff would be in place next year and communication about LRC services would be improved.

Action - WW to prepare an update report on the second student survey for the July Board meeting.

5. **Recruitment Update**

The Committee reviewed the 2025/26 recruitment report. Applications had increased for the third consecutive year, leading to a rise in market share. Growth plans were underway. T-Level applications had increased by 39 and enrolments were being closely monitored against a planned intake of 167 places, with funding secured for 122. Management was balancing recruitment targets with budget constraints and the upcoming January 2025 decant. Additional apprenticeship funding streams were also being explored.

Management confirmed the College aims to grow market share in line with the projected increase in the borough's 16–18 population, and to expand its apprenticeship provision. The College also plans to bid for expected NEET funding in September and is well positioned to do so.

The Committee asked whether waiting lists were anticipated. Management confirmed that a more robust tracking system is being implemented to manage demand and acknowledged that waiting lists are possible.

The Committee also inquired about the T-Level admissions process. Management explained that applicants are interviewed and offered a place if successful.

6. **2024/2025 In-Year Predicted Achievement, Retention, Attendance & English and Maths**

The Committee received an update on retention, achievement, attendance, and English and maths.

Retention improved for the third consecutive year. Predicted achievement outcomes, monitored through curriculum reviews, MLG reports, and ALARM meetings, were expected to exceed 90%, including partners and subcontractors.

English and maths data showed 3,533 enrolments with 93.2% retention. GCSE attendance, especially for 16–18s, remained a concern despite improvement strategies for 2025/26.

Management reported that Ofsted acknowledged attendance issues but

expected year-on-year improvement rather than national comparisons.

The College is participating in a Get Further and EEF research project involving 100 learners, with 50 receiving weekly tuition to assess impact on achieving Grade 4 in GCSE resits. An update will be provided in November.

Action – add research update to the November agenda.

Management confirmed staffing is stabilising after reliance on temporary staff, with permanent English and maths teams nearly in place. The Committee commended staff for maintaining standards.

The Principal reported attendance improvements in engineering and sports through targeted interventions, with further progress needed. The Committee also discussed early support strategies for at-risk students, including monthly tracking during probation.

The Committee emphasised the link between attendance and employability and suggested using employer partners to reinforce attendance expectations to students.

7. 2024/25 Level 4 Provision

The Committee discussed the current small cohort size and pass rate for the Level 4 provision. The Executive expressed satisfaction with the pass rate but emphasised the need for continuous improvement and increased student progression to LSBU, acknowledging related challenges.

It was noted that some LSBU applications come through UCAS, causing the College to only count direct applications, which affects reported engagement figures. Despite this, overall student engagement was increasing.

The Committee inquired about the ideal cohort size to ensure viability. The Executive committed to reviewing course hours, flexibility, and delivery methods to optimise the provision.

The Committee agreed that applications to the Level 4 provision were improving compared to previous years and welcomed increased staff support for the courses. When asked about the absence of dental technology progression courses, the LSBTC Principal explained these were governed by the General Dental Council.

8. 2024/25 Updated Quality Improvement Plan

The Committee reviewed the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2024/25, noting it as a working document outlining improvement areas identified in the College's 2023/24 SAR. The LSBTC Principal summarised key points and invited further questions after the meeting.

The Committee discussed challenges with work placements, noting Ofsted

had highlighted weaknesses in this area. The Executive explained difficulties placing under-18s in labs and construction sites due to safety restrictions. To address this, the College provided alternative activities such as talks, visits, and simulations.

When asked about Transport for London (TfL) offering placements, management confirmed TfL runs its own internship and apprenticeship schemes and cannot offer mainstream placements.

The Executive confirmed the College has a strong work experience system with reliable data, which will be presented at the next meeting.

Action – add work experience data to November agenda.

9. **2024/25 Apprenticeship Progress Report**

The Principal summarised key headlines, including clearing the backlog, all Business students passing, and a 41% overall achievement rate. One student received a distinction in their apprenticeship. Efforts continued to improve outcomes for the remaining electrical apprenticeships.

The Committee asked whether improving electrical apprenticeship results would lift the College out of intervention. The Executive confirmed this was likely, with achievement expected to exceed 45%.

The Committee also inquired whether the low carbon heating apprenticeship could serve as part of the Green Skills Hub.

10. **Safeguarding and Prevent Monitoring Report**

The Committee received the Safeguarding and Prevent Monitoring Report and noted that the full end-of-year report will be presented at the next meeting in the new academic year.

The Committee discussed the continued rise in student mental health disclosures. Management reported that a cross-college working group had been established to address the increase in referrals, and that a fuller update would be provided at the next meeting. The Committee also asked whether the Colleges were working with the University on this matter, and whether a broader discussion on student mental health should be scheduled.

Action - a further safeguarding report will be brought to the next meeting, including details of mental health initiatives, collaboration with the University, and proposals for wider discussion on student mental health.

The Committee considered the issue of gang-related violence. Management confirmed that targeted sessions for both students and staff had been delivered and that work in this area would continue given its importance.

The Committee reviewed the updated Prevent Duty Risk Assessment and

Self-Assessment, which had been revised in line with current guidance and signed off by the local Prevent Manager. The Committee queried whether the Board of Governors should be explicitly referenced in the document, given its overarching responsibility for Prevent. Subject to the inclusion of this amendment, the Committee approved the report.

11. **Teaching, Learning & Assessment Report**

The Committee received a report summarising the quality of learning at SBC, including lesson-observation data, updates on Creative Digital Arts, Apprenticeships, the “Merit or More” initiative, Course Review activity, CPD, and Digital Learning. The Executive Principal highlighted the key issues.

It was noted that the current Digital Learning Strategy (2022–34) did not reference AI, however, the updated 2025–27 version now includes AI and added hyperlinks to relevant frameworks. The Committee discussed the importance of addressing AI’s misuse, such as plagiarism, and ensuring related work aligns with LSBU and Group initiatives. An AI and digital working group at LSBU will connect the SBC lead with the Acting Vice Chancellor.

The Committee approved the updated Digital Learning Strategy, subject to the discussions outlined above.

12. **Quality KPIs for 2025/26**

The Committee reviewed the draft headline quality KPIs for 2025-26 and agreed that attendance targets should be more ambitious for both adult learners and apprentices.

Members discussed achievement KPIs and requested benchmarking against comparable colleges. The Executive Principal agreed to source this data and confirmed an external review scheduled for March. She also noted that ongoing ALPS collaboration with SBUSixth would produce an additional KPI.

Revised KPIs will be circulated and presented to the July Board for approval.

13. **EDI Annual Report**

The Committee discussed the annual EDI report, which outlined key agenda items and priority areas for future focus. While the report was developed by the Group, members welcomed the inclusion of SBC and SBA, noting SBC’s efforts to address achievement gaps, though further progress is needed.

The Committee agreed that future reports would benefit from clearer timelines and deadlines for contributions. Recommendations for improvement should be fed back to the LSBU Executive.

Concerns were raised that SBC seemed “slotted in” rather than fully integrated. The Committee requested clarification on the report’s

development and its intended impact. The Executive confirmed a summary report would be used to drive actions. Members also requested clearer distinction between Group-led and SBC-specific EDI initiatives.

The Committee noted declining progress on pay gaps and sector-wide diversity challenges, recommending raising these with the Association of Colleges. Despite a successful black leadership development course at SBC, progression into senior leadership roles remained limited.

Action - members to send any further EDI feedback or suggestions to the Committee Secretary for onward submission to the Group Executive.

14. 2025/26 Sub-contracting Policies and List of Subcontractors & Partnership Contracts (for Board approval)

The Committee discussed the 2025/26 subcontracting policy, noting its circulation was deferred pending revisions to comply with the new Procurement Act, which modernises and increases transparency in FE procurement. Further analysis was commissioned, with an updated policy to be presented at a future meeting.

The Committee queried whether the executive could provide the subcontractor list for Board approval at the start of the academic year. It was noted this timeline may be challenging, as the tender process - dependent on LSBU Group colleagues - is expected to begin soon.

The Committee welcomed the LSBU Group procurement team's support and their offer to liaise with LSBU Executive colleagues to help meet key deadlines.

15. Any other business

The Committee noted that it was Wayne Wright's last Committee meeting and thanked him for his commitment and contributions to SBC.

Date of next meeting
18 November 2025

Confirmed as a true record

..... (Chair)