

**CORPORATION BOARD of UNITED COLLEGES GROUP**  
**Minutes of Teaching, Learning and Skills Committee**  
**26 January 2026, 6 pm by Zoom**

**Members Present:** Colin Smith (Chair), Airina Gordon (staff governor), Tim Ryan, Tanya Rose, Janet Davidson, Jessica Amarteifio (student governor), Stephen Davis (CEO/Governor).

**In attendance:** Zoë Lawrence (Director of Governance), James Wilson (Principal), Nicola McLean (Interim Vice Principal), Rob Boucherat (Interim Director Innovation and Enterprise), Bilal Bobat (Interim Vice Principal), Jonathan Parish (Assistant Principal)\*.

\*for relevant agenda items only

<b>Procedural</b>	
1	<p><b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b>                      Apologies were received from Serene Stennett.</p>
2	<p><b>Declarations of interests in agenda items</b>                      No additional interests were declared.</p>
3	<p><i>(Minutes and all papers for the meeting were provided 7 days in advance)</i></p> <p><b>i. Approve minutes of the Teaching, Learning and Skills Committee of 10 November 2025</b>                      The minutes were approved as an accurate record.</p> <p><b>ii. Matters Arising</b>                      There were no matters arising.</p>

<b>PRESENTATIONS</b>	
4	<p><i>(Papers circulated in advance)</i></p> <p><b>i. Curriculum Presentation – Lifelong Learning</b>                      JP’s presentation provided an overview of the provision offered by the Lifelong Learning Career Cluster, highlighting its strengths and challenges. The details had been included in his informative paper. CS noted the efforts made to ensure that the curriculum was inclusive and accessible to learners and sought a particular example where barriers had been removed to facilitate this. JP said that the example which he thought had a significant impact on learners was their involvement in the Planet Earth Games. Learners were exposed to new experiences and sustainable food options, and several changed their dietary habits as a result. This demonstrated the transformational wider learning impact and how ESOL was much more than just a qualification. TR asked about the courses which started termly and at which points assessments were made. JP explained that there was an initial diagnostic assessment then further assessment points mid-way and at the end. It was acknowledged that learners would be at different levels. Claims for the qualifications were made in-year. Members discussed progression from ESOL courses to vocational programmes within UCG. It was thought that only 10% progressed to a vocational programme in the college with most moving to external positive destinations including other colleges. BB commented that as part of curriculum planning vocational ESOL courses for construction and science were being considered to try to support student progression from ESOL to retain learners on these pathways. The Committee thanked JP for his clear and informative presentation.</p>

TEACHING, LEARNING AND SKILLS	
5	<p><i>(Papers circulated in advance)</i></p> <p><b>i. MIDES Data</b></p> <p>RB presented this report which showed the profile of UCG students by deprivation based on their home postcodes. 56% of UCG students were from the three lowest deprivation bands. 48% of learners had no GCSE maths or English 4-9 grade with 22% having no grade in those subjects. These starting points were lower for UCG students compared to other colleges both nationally and elsewhere in London. UCG had seen a significant increase in English and Maths enrolments for GCSE. In response to these factors UCG was providing more targeted support for students at curriculum level including progress tracking and interventions. A GCSE marking tool had been introduced to support GCSE mock exams, plus additional tuition on a one-to-one basis. Comment was made of how the MIDES data confirms the type of student attracted to UCG and how that influences the educational character. This in turn can impact on student attendance. It would be important therefore to compare UCG's attendance with colleges with a similar student profile on deprivation. The narrative about UCG students was an important consideration. CS asked if there was data on students' starting points to be able to assess distance travelled in a more meaningful way. Even if students do not achieve a grade 4 or above at GCSE, achieving a grade from no previous grade would be progress. Members asked if the results of the November resits for English and Maths could be available for the next meeting of the Committee in March.</p> <p>It was noted that the Value-Added paper would be presented to the March meeting, and that an alternative provider had been identified in place of ALPS as they only reported on level 3. Members also discussed the impact of travel on attendance and other barriers to learning. Following the discussion at the previous meeting on transition pathways, learning from other colleges was being sought.</p> <p><b>ii. QDP Student Survey</b></p> <p>RB reported that the response rate of 79% to the November QDP student survey was the highest yet and that it demonstrated a good level of engagement from students and staff. The electronic completion of the survey had been beneficial in achieving this high response rate. Whilst the BSC target had not been reached of being in the B quartile, the results showed an improvement from the same survey from the prior year. The paper showed the responses to the questions in the B quartile, movement within the curriculum areas, and areas where more attention was needed. Adult learners were more positive about the college than 16–18-year-old learners. Paddington Campus received the most responses in the D quartile. Responses from offsite learners were consistently high. Concern was expressed at the slightly less positive response to the question on recommending the college to a friend which would be investigated. The results overall would be communicated to students with actions taken in response to their feedback, including assessment of how to improve the perceptions of the Paddington Campus for younger learners. The lower response rate from the Euston Skills Centre was thought to be due to staffing issues at the time of the survey window. <b>The Committee noted the report.</b></p> <p><b>iii. Student Destinations Report</b></p> <p>This report largely concerned the progression of full-time students. Some destinations were already known but the research evidenced these and also sought unknown destinations. There was a slight reduction in the proportion progressing to HE, but overall</p>

91% of destinations were positive. There were differences between colleges (CWC and CNWL) though this followed the proportions of adult and younger learners. It was anticipated that the GLA London Learner Survey which also included destinations may be included in the research the following year. QDP also offered a student destinations survey which may be considered by the college. TR asked if it was known whether the progressors to paid employment had taken roles with direct relevance to their course which may be used as a measure of impact. This was not assessed as part of the survey but could be considered in future years. **The Committee noted the report.**

**iv. Student Experience & Outcomes Balance Score Card (BSC)**

JW presented the BSC. Attendance KPIs had now been split by age group (adults and 16-19), and the achievement KPIs had been updated with this year's percentage targets based on an increase from the prior year to embed progress. It was noted that student attendance for 16–19-year-olds was down 4% compared to the same point the previous year. JD asked how parents, careers and guardians were involved and how persistence absence was tackled. Parents, carers and guardians were sent an automated message by text and email for unauthorised absence but the influence of parents, careers and guardians in respect to attendance was considered to be weak. Parents' evenings for 16-19-year-old students were often poorly attended at the college, unlike schools and sixth forms. 50% attendance levels or absence for 4 weeks was a trigger for additional intervention.

Management was taking on caseloads of students to engage in personalised conversations about their attendance. It was hoped that this would create some impact by February half-term. SD mentioned the involvement of social services for absent students under the age of 18 at the Paddington Campus. NMc explained that several times each day staff challenged students who were on campus but not in class, checking timetables and would take the student to class if necessary. This was showing some behavioural changes and improvement in attendance. Progress coaches were also holding conversations with relevant students as they entered the campuses. Good practice on attendance was being shared within the college, including rewards and incentives.

JW said how it was important to try to address any barriers to attendance in the first six weeks from enrolment, though this had impact on resources and capacity. The key was to talk to learners and understand how their attendance could be improved. CS asked if there were key themes why students did not attend or if it was more complex than that. NMc said that she thought it more complex. In several cases she was aware of students who were on track to achieve but needed to accommodate paid employment to support the family. Others were dealing with chronic ill-health. The Committee considered the benefits of condensing timetables and twilight teaching sessions to support students' employment patterns.

AG said that she thought there were things that the college could do to support attendance. These included the quality of teaching and learning, for this to be good so that students wanted to attend college. Also for clear communication with students when a teacher was absent so they were not travelling for an hour for a class which would not be taking place and replaced with self-led study in the LRC. JW agreed with this and acknowledged that this could be managed more effectively. The experience in the classroom and relationships students have with their teachers was important. NMc said that it was important for students to have a sense of inclusion and belonging at the college

	<p>to support attendance. The committee considered these internal and external factors to support student attendance.</p> <p><b>v. Admissions Policy</b>  NMc explained that following the introduction of ProPortal for the admissions process, it had become necessary to review and revise the Admissions Policy to make various sections of it clearer, reducing any ambiguity. It was anticipated that the clearer wording would avoid any future misunderstandings or complaints. The changes had been developed in consultation with the relevant departments in the college including MIS, marketing and careers. The Committee has delegated authority from the Corporation to approve this policy. The TLS Committee had no questions about the policy and <b>resolved to approve the Admissions Policy.</b></p> <p><b>vi. Access &amp; Participation Statement – HE</b>  RB presented his paper which provided a draft HE Access and Participation Statement for review and recommendation by this committee to the Corporation. He explained that the Office for Students (OfS) was in the process of consulting on revising the conditions of registration for further education colleges and it was proposing that the requirement for a HE access and participation statement should be disapplied for FE colleges without degree awarding powers. This change was likely to come into effect during the Summer 2026. It was proposed by the OfS that the requirements of the statement were adequately covered through FE colleges Accountability Agreements. RB said that UCG were keen to comply with the conditions of registration in the intervening period and proposed this Statement to fulfil that. The Committee had no questions <b>and resolved to recommend the draft access and participation statement for HE to the Corporation for approval.</b></p>
<b>STRATEGIC</b>	
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p><b>16 March 2026</b></p> <p>Meeting closed at 7.40 pm</p>

Minutes taken by Zoë Lawrence 27 January 2026

**SIGNED:** ..... **Date:**  
Colin Smith  
TLS Chair

**ACTIONS**

REF	Action	Lead	Status
<b>Nov 05iv</b>	To take forward an assessment of UCG’s external reputation.	<b>ALG</b>	<b>Complete</b>
<b>05i</b>	November English & Maths resits to be shared with the Committee at the March meeting	<b>JW</b>	<b>Complete</b>