

**MEETING OF THE CORPORATION OF MACCLESFIELD COLLEGE**

**TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2025 AT 9:30AM**

**VELOCITY BOARDROOM**

**Clerk:** Ms S Gardiner

In attendance	C Johns, (Chair), M Wright, G Bristow, R Kay (Principal), P Hunter, R Milkins, I Cass, I Jones, H Taylor, D Rutley, R Charlton, M Botwe, B Oultram (Student)
Apologies	E Kennedy, J Lewis
Non-governor attendance	A Farrar (Director of Finance) T Cosgrave (for Item 6i only) C Bennett (for Item 6ii only) K Roberts (for Item 6iii only) S Catania (for Item 6iv only) S Lord (for Item 7 & 8 only)

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Updated Corporation dates to be shared with the Board	SG	ASAP
JISC to attend December board meeting to provide a full update	SG/DF	December 2025
Growth chart to be included in any future updates on enrolment	SM	Ongoing

**MINUTES**

**Item Title**

**1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies were received from E Kennedy and J Lewis.

**2. Declaration of Members' Interest**

There were no declarations of Members' interest.

**Papers received had been uploaded to Decisions and were available to Governors one week prior to the meeting.**

**3. Minutes from the meetings held on 8 July 2025.**

**To confirm and approve the Part 1 Minutes of the meetings held on 8 July 2025.**

The minutes of the Corporation meetings held on 8 July 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

#### **4. Matters arising from the meeting held on 8 July 2025**

The Director of Governance confirmed that all outstanding actions from the meeting on 8 July 2025 have now been completed.

#### **5. Principals Update**

##### **i. KPI**

The Principal presented the KPI document, providing an overview of the College's performance for 24/25. Achievement rates for 16-18 year and Apprentices have both seen a significant increase and are above the national average.

##### **ii. College Structure**

The Principal shared the new College Structure with the Board, advising that Programme Leads have moved into a middle management role, and are being supported through management training. Seb Catania has joined the College as Director of Welfare and Student Services and is a member of the Senior Management Team.

##### **iii. Enrolment Update**

The Principal noted the paper prepared by the Interim Deputy Principal and confirmed that enrolment for 25/26 has been a great success, with 1402 currently enrolled on study programmes. This is a significant increase and above the College's allocation of 1236. The Principal confirmed that the College would therefore be eligible for an in year growth payment, however the DfE have not yet confirmed details of this payment.

##### **iv. Complaints and Compliments Report**

This paper was tabled for Member's information. Members are invited to note that complaints have seen a significant decrease in 24/25 and all complaints have been closed with no appeals.

#### **6. Curriculum Update**

##### **i. Results and Achievements – Apprenticeships**

Tracy Cosgrave, The Director of Employer and Commercial Services, attended the meeting for this item only to present the achievements for apprenticeships in 24/25 and noted the following points:

- Overall achievement 69.7% (7.4% above the national average).
- Level 2, 3 and 4 achievements were all above national average, with a significant increase for Level 4 learners, being 27.9% above national average.
- Excellent relationships with employers and key stakeholders has enabled the development of programmes that align effectively with local and regional opportunities.
- Quality of teaching and learning is consistently high. As a result, 28% of apprentices who completed their End Point Assessment in the 24/25 academic year achieved a Distinction grade
- Monitoring of learners' progress is outstanding resulting in almost all learners achieving within their planned end date.

- Attendance on apprenticeship programmes is very high with 96.3% attendance for learners who attend classroom delivery.
- All delivery staff working with apprentices possess expert knowledge and maintain current, relevant industry experience. This enables them to provide exceptional support to apprentices, fostering high levels of achievement and successful progression outcomes.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether the College links in with Universities for Apprentices?** TC confirmed that this was part of the learners ILR. Some courses offer pathways to higher levels, however there is often a requirement for the learner to be a the specific role in order to progress to higher levels.

**CHALLENGE: A Member asked how many employers the College is currently working with and whether there were any businesses that the College would like to work with.** TC confirmed that at presented the College has 700 apprentices on programme and has seen a rise in demand for positions in construction, childcare and engineering. TC advised that the science pathway continues to be a challenge, with companies opting for graduates rather than apprenticeships.

**CHALLENGE: A Member asked if the Board could offer any assistance with attracting employers in the science field.** TC confirmed that a lot of work has already been undertaken and continues to be done to meet with business in this sector, including Alderley Park. As confirmed above, the field tends to opt for graduates, however the team will continue to work with local companies to promote apprenticeships.

The Board wished to thank TC and her team for all their hard work and their amazing achievement.

## ii. Results and Achievements – Study Programme

Charlotte Bennett, Centre Principal, attended the meeting for this item only to present the achievements for study programme learners in 24/25 and noted the following points:

- Overall achievement rates for 16-19 year olds has increased from the previous year to 96.5%.
- Achievement rates over each level have also increased.
- There are 3 areas of the curriculum that are currently under review as they did not achieve target, however CB confirmed that a lot of work has been carried out this academic year on IAG to ensure students are on the correct course and the correct level.
- Adult achievement rates have also seen an increase, along with retention.

**CHALLENGE: A Member asked how is learner's understanding of what is required when moving into employment measured.** CB advised that the College set the standards required and we work closely with employers, confirming the skills set they require.

**CHALLENGE: A Member requested the numbers for the 3 areas that underperformed.** CB confirmed that science was a small cohort of 7 learners and this provision has now been removed this academic year. Health and Social Care is a large cohort, with approximately 150 learners enrolled this year. This curriculum area does have its challenges, with many students requiring additional support from the welfare team.

**A Member asked if the College could do more to support those students in need?** The Principal confirmed that the new Director of Welfare and Student Services has had

a positive impact and wrap around support is available for all students. CB added that engagement in enrichment activities has also been reviewed, with a wider offer being made available to all students.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried why the achievement rates were lower in IT. Are students receiving the right amount of exam preparation?** CB confirmed that the BTEC exam for IT is challenging. It was apparent that more exam preparation time was required on timetables and this has now been rectified for this academic year.

**CHALLENGE: A Member asked how are we celebrating success as well as making improvements.** CB confirmed that team meetings are held regularly for staff to share best practice. CPD days are planned for all teaching staff. This enables staff from across the College to discuss their achievements and to seek guidance on areas that may not have gone so well.

### iii. Results and Achievements – Maths and English

Kerry Roberts, Centre Principal, attended the meeting for this item only to present the achievements for math and English and noted the following points:

- English has seen an increase in achievement and retention. Maths has also seen an increase in retention.
- Despite the rise in student numbers, all students have been grouped to their grade level this academic year.
- English numbers have increased by 53% over the past two years and maths has increased to almost 50%. KR confirmed that this rise in numbers is not limited to the North West, with Colleges across the country seeing a rise each year.
- KR confirmed that support strategies are in place for students, through extra sessions and tutorials and student have access to digital learning tools. Staff continue to undergo training for their subject area and we continue to embed maths and English across all curriculum areas.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether achievement data is shared at open events.** KR stated that it is not directly shared, however is discussed on a 1:1 basis. The importance of attendance is also made clear to students and parents/carers.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether the increase of enrolments is due to students wanting to sit their maths and/or English GCSE.** KR confirmed that a lot of work has been carried out to ensure achievement in maths and/or English, however could not confirm directly whether this was the reason for the increased enrolments.

**CHALLENGE: A Member asked whether there are any diagnostics around achievement, are there any common themes?** KR confirmed that English students are quite diverse and therefore teaching staff are able to adapt to support learner needs. In maths, a 5 point check plan has been introduced which takes place across the year to ensure students are on track with their learning.

### iv. Overview of New Welfare Team and Services

Seb Catania, Director of Welfare and Student Services, attended the meeting to present an overview of the Welfare Team structure and the services they provide to all students.

SC confirmed that it is the team's goal to ensure that all students feel included, supported and safe. The College has a large ALS team, which includes new roles for careers advice and a Student Standards Support Officer. This role in particular has seen a real impact

on student's attendance, along with ensuring students are aware of the services available to them.

The College has a strong Safeguarding and Welfare Team, with the new addition of an Enrichment Officer.

SC confirmed that meeting students needs is of paramount importance. In order to achieve this, SC shared the following points:

- The team will ensure the College culture and physical environment addresses the emotional health and wellbeing of students. Students have access to new Hub, Quiet Rooms and Study Skills Centre.
- The Pass Programme gives students the opportunity to engage with organisations and individuals with real life experience, who can support personal development and inspire independence.
- Safeguarding is embedded in everything that we do, ensuring staff and students are confident of who to speak to if they have a concern and that they will get the right support.
- To provide an effective enrichment programme that supports personal development and builds college cohesion.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried how the team can ensure they are making progress.** SC shared that it a challenge to measure culture, however student focus groups results show that 96% of students feel safe at the College. SC confirmed that a deep dive is to be carried out on these results.

**CHALLENGE: A Member asked whether group support is offered to students?** SC confirmed that more development is required for group sessions, as each students is different and support needs vary. SC does see group work as a positive however, as students are able to access peer support. SC advised that he is also looking to create student forums groups, eg LGBTQ+, as additional support for students.

## 7. Annual Health and Safety Report 24/25

Stuart Lord, Director of Estates, attended the meeting for this item only to present the Annual Health and Safety Report. SL noted the following points:

- 100% compliance for statutory maintenance in academic year 24/25.
- 100% of identified Health and Safety actions highlighted on departmental inspections have been completed.
- Accidents have reduced from the prior year, with no RIDDOR reportable accidents reported.
- The College currently has 69 first aiders.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether the increase of traffic is causing any concern.** SL advised that this is a concern, however to date, there have been no incidents. The installation of the parking eye system for the rear car park has also assisted to reduce non staff/student members using the campus to park.

## 8. Business Continuity

SL provide an update on the recent business continuity activities. SL confirmed that a planned business continuity session took place on 17 June 2025 in association with Gallagher Insurance & Risk Management. This session was very successful and highlighted strengths of the Business

Continuity Team, the effectiveness of the policy and procedures in place and the excellent channels of communication in place, both internally and externally.

SL assured the Board that the College remains well prepared to managed potential disruptions with good processes and communication channels in place.

## 9. Business

### i. Public Values Statement

A Farrar, Director of Finance, presented the Public Values Statement for 25/26. AF advised that no changes had been made, however required Board approval as per the DfE guidance.

**The Pubic Values Statement was fully approved by Board.**

### ii. Draft Financial Outturn for 2024/25

AF presented the draft financial outturn for 2024/25 confirming that at the end of the academic year the College financial health equated to an overall grading of Good. This is a clear indicator that the College's financial management, operational control and growth strategy are now delivering results.

AF confirmed that the financial year has progressed well and the College reached year end on target. AF noted the following points:

- The College exceeded enrolments for 24/25, therefore were eligible for in year growth payment, however this was subsequently reduced by one third by the DfE.
- Apprenticeships continue to outperform expectations, ending the year over target. This is a testament to the team's hard work and delivery quality.
- Increased learner numbers, together with pricing adjustments across commercial areas led to an increase of £306k above budget.
- Pay costs remained at 66.07%, aligning almost exactly with the DfE benchmark of 65%.
- There are now no outstanding capital commitments.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried whether the 65% benchmark is the same across all Colleges?** AF confirmed that this benchmark is the same for all Colleges, apart from land-based colleges. AF added that if the College was not in line with this target, this would trigger DfE intervention.

**CHALLENGE: A Member queried why cash days were so low at just 4 days.** AF explained that numerous capital projects had affected cashflow, together with lagged funding from previous years.

**CHALLENGE: A Member stated that the adult budget had met full allocation and asked what the adult offer included.** AF confirmed that Counselling was a large cohort across 3 levels, construction, pottery and catering. The Vice Chair added that this offer was community inclusive.

**CHALLENGE: A Member commented on the success of enrolment and asked the Executive Team why they think students choose Macclesfield over other Colleges in the region.** The Principal stated that some of the reasons are because Macclesfield has a wide offer, a friendly and inclusive atmosphere and is a small site, which some students prefer.

## **10. Link Governor Updates**

The Director of Governance confirmed that any updates will be provided at the Corporation Meeting in December.

## **11. Policies**

The following policies were reviewed and approved by the Corporation:

- Health & Safety Policy
- Lockdown Policy
- Sustainability and Environment Development Policy & Plan
- Student Financial Support Policy new (was Discretionary Learner Support Funds)
- Bursary Policy new (was Advanced Learning loan Policy)
- Child Protection and Adults at Risk Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary and Capability Procedures for Senior Post Holders
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement
- Family Policy
- Data Breach Policy
- Data Retention Policy
- Freedom of Speech Policy
- Information Security Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy – Staff
- IT Acceptable Use Policy – Student
- IT Security Policy
- AI Policy
- Anti Fraud & Corruption Policy
- Financial Regulations
- Refund Policy FE
- Reserves Policy
- Tuition Fees Policy
- Higher Education Fee Payment Policy
- Higher Education Refund and Compensation Policy
- Compliments and Complaints Policy
- Grievance Procedures for Senior Post Holders
- Safer Recruitment and Vetting Policy & Procedures
- Health and Safety of Learners on work based-placement
- Pensions Discretion Policy

## **12. Governance**

### **i. Governor Learning Walks**

The Director of Governance confirmed that the Interim Deputy Principal had provided dates for Members to attend Learning Walks following the half term break. The Director of Governance confirmed that these dates will be emailed to all members and they are to confirm their attendance.

**ii. College Terms Dates 25/26**

The terms dates for academic year 2026/27 were fully approved by Board and will be displayed on the College website.

**iii. Corporation Meetings Update**

The Vice Chair shared an update following the first Transition Group Meeting. The Director of Governance shared the full timeline for the pre-merger process and confirmed that an additional Corporation Meeting will be required on 19 March 2026 via teams. It was also confirmed that the July Corporation Meeting will need to take place on Wednesday 8 July and it was agreed that this would be held at Macclesfield College. The Director of Governance will send updated appointments following the meeting.

**13. Date and Time of the Next Meeting**

The next Corporation Meeting will take place on Tuesday 9 December 2025 at 9:30am.

**14. Impact**

The Corporation found the presentations extremely worthwhile and they provided a clear indication of the dedication and commitment from the staff. Increased student numbers has had a real impact on the support services and the maths and English team and to be able to achieve increased pass rates is a testament to the staff.