

EXETER COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

CORPORATION BOARD

Public Minutes of the meeting held on 9.30am on Friday 10 October 2025 at Petroc, Tiverton Campus, Bolham Road, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 6SH.

Present

Adam Watt	Corporation Chair
Patrick Tigwell	Corporation Vice Chair

John Laramy CBE	Principal/CEO
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Sue Clarke OBE
 Antony Hart
 Neil Hitchings
 Wilf Hudson
 Rob Hutchins
 Harrison Littler
 Carol McCormack OBE

Damian Norcombe
 Cynthia Sedgman
 Sally Wolkowski

Pamela Degregorio
 Ayomide Okesola
 Chelsy Ingram
 Victoria Roberts

Jo Boardman
 Abbie Sawyer

Apologies

Graham Atkins
 Albertina Mihaila
 Stewart Noakes
 Tim Quine
 Stephen Wiltshire

In Attendance

Jade Otty	Deputy CEO
Richard Church	Chief Operating Officer
Sam Hillman	Deputy Vice Principal
Gemma Noble	Executive Director of People and Organisational Development (<i>Item 5.3</i>)
Ben Arnold	<i>Head of People Operations (Item 5.3)</i>

1. Welcome and Apologies Action

The Chair welcomed the Board to the first Board Meeting of 2025/2026 and extended his thanks to Petroc for providing the venue.

A warm welcome was extended to Chelsy Ingram, FE Student Governor, to her first Board Meeting.

Apologies were noted from Graham Atkins, Stewart Noakes, Tim Quine and Stephen Wiltshire.

Apologies were also noted from the new HE student Governor Albertina Mihaila, she has been unable to attend today, however the Board look forward to welcoming her to future meetings.

Declarations of Interest

Adam Watt declared interests for anything relating to Exeter College Services and the University of Exeter.

John Laramy declared interests for anything relating to Exeter College Services.

Jo Boardman declared interests in anything relating to Petroc / in relation to the merger.

2. Minutes of Meetings

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2025, as circulated, were agreed as correct, with one amendment to include Adam Watt on the attendee list.

2.2 The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2025, as circulated, were agreed as correct, with one amendment to include Adam Watt on the attendee list.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Sally Wolkowski joined the meeting.

4. Chair's Report

The Chair thanked colleagues for making the time to have individual meetings prior to his first Board meeting, he expressed delight at being appointed Chair and values the insight of fellow Governors.

The Chair discussed the importance of a talent pipeline, conversations around diversity of the Board, how to ensure EDI is threaded into the work of the Board and made space for through standing items.

Practical challenges were noted related to growth and space, the Chair encouraged Governors to think about how they can help the executive team of an ever-growing college.

The Chair stressed the importance of knowing and adding value as a Board, especially considering a potential merger.

The Board noted the report.

5. **Strategic Matters for discussion**

5.1 Exeter College 2025 Results

The Board received 2025 results, previously scrutinised at Q & S.

The Board noted that the significant achievement of Apprenticeships achieving 75 by 25, thanking JO, SH and the team for this fantastic achievement.

It was also noted that high needs and Pupil Premium student statistics have improved, both 16-18 and adult achievement are above the national average.

Governors questioned if the results are analysed by gender, and the visuals used when presenting results. The Board was reassured that as gender is an EDI category, this is measured using ALP's. Statistics show that working class girls are the most likely to leave or seriously underperform overall, however boys are more likely to underperform at level 1. Visuals feature more females due to the statistics.

The Board were pleased to hear that 81% of students received a place at their first choice University, students are encouraged to be ambitious with their first choice.

The Board were informed of a change in exam boards for GCSE Maths.

The Fountain Centre saw students achieve great results. The Board acknowledged the work that has gone into ensuring young people are supported. This provides assurance for the Board, going forward Q & S will look at students leaving the connect provision, how they are supported onto other courses / apprenticeships.

Intensive care was successful, the three courses selected all made significant improvement,

The Board received the outstanding results, and thanked JO for her hard work.

**JO, JB,
SC**

5.2 Principal's Strategic Report

The item was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes.

5.2.1 Pay Award

The item was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes.

5.2.2 Merger Update

The item was dealt with as a confidential item and recorded in the confidential minutes.

5.3 HR Annual Report

The Board were informed of the changes made to the recruitment process; this has ensured that the number of campaigns that have not required readvertising has improved. Improvements have also been made in the disciplinary process.

The staff survey saw its highest response numbers ever this year. A common theme is that the facilities need improving and space is a challenge.

The priorities for the next year are the merger, and the potential impact of the Employee Rights Bill this would have a significant impact on the College.

Staff Governors spoke about the ways in which feedback can be used within faculties and departments, and the benefits of sharing best practice of how to respond to the results of the staff survey.

Governors asked what reasons were given to why people want to work for the college and were reassured to hear that this is related to reputation, money, the fact that the college is seen as quite a secure employer, the overall package that is offered is also a big appeal.

The Board noted the report, and the Executive Director of People and Organisational development and Head of People Operations and noted the HR Annual report.

6. **Learner Voice Update**

6.1 College News

The college restaurant won the AA student restaurant of the year for the UK. Summer works included a new patisserie room.

The Education Endowment foundation have partnered with the college; they are interested in helping disadvantaged students thrive.

The College now has use of the ground floor of CLS, student and staff feedback is fantastic, contractors' hand over to us on 25th November.

- 6.2 Learner Voice
The report was taken as read.

The Board were informed that it has been a positive start to the year, tutor rep process is underway, the number is expected to increase in coming weeks.

The Board was pleased to hear that tutor rep nominations are on track for November Learner Voice and were pleased that there was ESOL representation.

The Board thanked Ayo for her detailed report.

- 6.3 Student Governor Report
The student Governor provided an update on her first month, she is proud to represent students, enjoyed attending Q & S, she has met with Adam, Jade, Jo and Abbie. Ayo has been very helpful. She expressed her excitement and commitment to being a student Governor.

JB thanked Ayo and Chelsy for attending the Unlock conference with the Petroc student Governor.

The Board thanked Chelsy for her verbal report.

Part 2 COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR APPROVAL/ASSURANCE/AWARENESS

7. **Recommendations from Business Services Committee**
7.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 22 September 2025.

The Committee discussed student recruitment, CLS handover, Flowerpots, Hill 2 progress and the busiest summer works programme. The next meeting will look at how the college is able to recover from a cyber-attack.

There were two items for approval, one being the pay award, which was approved earlier on in the meeting, the next recommendation for approval is the Financial Regulations 2025, Financial Regulations Appendices 2025 and Financial Procedures 2025. The Board were informed of a few minor amendments to the regulations from last year.

The Board approved the Financial Regulations 2025, Financial Regulations Appendices 2025 and Financial Procedures 2025.

8. **Recommendations from Quality and Standards Committee**

8.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 29 September 2025.

The Committee has no items for approval; EDI statement and policy is on a 2-year cycle.

The Committee looked at the complaints process and the timeliness of addressing complaints and were reassured that most complaints are resolved very early on, every complaint was in the 30-day process. This provided good insight into how EDI is visible in the reporting process.

Value statements were provided, this is not for approval, but good indicators of impact.

The Board noted the report.

9. **Recommendations from Search and Governance Committee**

9.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meetings on 6 October 2025

For assurance, members of the JSG and S & G to form an interview panel for appointment to the Board for the merged college. Lead governors – we will focus on the required lead governor roles and consider the wider span of these roles in the new year.

The new Chair is in place and is fully engaged with the process.

There is one approval item, co-option of new member of the audit committee Tony Rose, this would be to fill a vacancy. His CV is strong and included in the papers.

The Board approved to Co-Opt Tony Rose for Audit & Risk.

10 **Recommendations from Remuneration Committee**

10.1 Executive Summary from Committee Meeting on 06 October 2025

10.2

For assurance, appraisals for Senior Post Holders have been held, SLT have been set various targets. If the merger goes ahead, the targets will be reviewed.

The minutes will be with you as quickly as possible; we will endeavour that this will be before Special Board on 4th November.

The Board noted the report.

Part 3 REPORTS AND MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

These reports and minutes will be taken as read and noted.

If any member would like to raise any specific questions, would they please advise the Head of Governance in advance of this meeting.

11. **Reports**

11.1 Opportunities and Developments Register

11.2 Sustainability and Net Zero Report

11.3 Sealings Report

11.4 Governor Attendance

11.5 Masterplan and Property Strategy (in full)

11. **Reports**

12. **Dates of scheduled meetings for 2025/2026**

- 12 December 2025
- 27 March 2026
- 3 July 2026

13. **AoB**