



Quality Strategy

2025/2026

Academic Year

SLT Owner	Emma Brannen
Department Area	Curriculum & Quality
Date of Review	September 2025
Date of Approval	October 2025
Approved by	Corporation
Next Review Date	September 2026
Status	Internal Publication

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Purpose

The purpose of this Quality Assurance and Improvement Strategy is to outline the College's overall Quality Strategy for 25/26 and support the College in achieving its mission.

The Quality Assurance and Improvement Strategy applies to activities undertaken on behalf of The Sandwell Colleges by its Board of Governors and staff. The Quality Assurance and Improvement Strategy provides a clear framework to improve performance and indicates key actions in order to support change.

We will seek to demonstrate that:

- The Colleges are recognised locally and regionally as an institution that provides the highest quality teaching and learning for academic and vocational subjects, through a curriculum offer that meets the needs of learners, employers and our communities.
- Challenging targets and KPIs are set to continuously improve the College's performance by drawing on a wide range of relevant data, and engagement with and feedback from key stakeholders, and that achievement against these targets is measured and recorded against any identified action points in Quality Improvement Plans at Curriculum area and College level.
- Use and analysis of data is embedded so that data on student achievement, the quality of teaching and learning and other relevant information including student feedback and destinations continues to be systematically collected and used to inform the overall quality of education.
- We work collaboratively with partners, employers, other providers and external agencies in reviewing, innovating and improving the experience of learners, engaging partners in shaping quality and curriculum to meet local and regional skills needs and employer demand.
- Continually improve teaching, training, learning and assessment to further raise standards, to meet college and regulators' expectations and ensure consistency across all provision types and cohorts.
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion are at the heart of the curriculum and that quality assurance processes are focused on ensuring an inclusive experience for all learners.
- Apprenticeship provision continues to improve, working towards being assessed as Good at the next Ofsted inspection.

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We will grow our One Team culture and:

- Provide a variety of means for our learners and apprentices, customers and other stakeholders to honestly express their views on our services and have them taken into account.
- Be responsive and accountable to our stakeholders, including our learners and apprentices, employees, the local community, government agencies and employers to ensure good standards of service and delivery of stakeholder skills needs.
- Develop and maintain a college culture which is One Team, embodies the values of CARE, and is self-critical, resilient, responsive, honest, open and committed to achieving excellence. We will take pride in our work and its impact on students and endeavour to continually reflect on and improve the impact we have on students' lives.
- Establish and maintain quality assurance and improvement systems that enable us to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses and respond to improvement needs effectively through a variety of themes including:
 - Ensuring that our staff are able to respond quickly and effectively to the challenges of self-assessment targets and continuous improvement by investing in developing the skills of staff through training and continuous professional development (CPD) and a culture of excellence.
 - Providing an environment and resources that reflect and reinforce high standards within the College.

Continuous monitoring through application of this policy will allow the College to evaluate its progress. Application of the Quality Strategy will result in:

- Evidence of continued improvements in, or consistently improving and high levels of student achievement.
- Increase in learners not only achieving their qualifications but developing the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to lead successful lives and to move in further education, training or employment.
- Data on high numbers of learners reaching their intended destinations and progressing to relevant careers, higher education and positive next steps.
- Evidence of increased numbers of learners making significant progress in English and maths and achieving their English and mathematics qualifications grade 4 in their time with us.
- Impact of successful employer and wider stakeholder engagement (Civic, Community, Employer and Education partners) and collaboration in the development of a high-quality curriculum that is relevant, purposeful and reflects the needs of the employer.

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- Evidence of reducing any discernible achievement gaps and with particular groups that have been identified through the SAR, addressing social inequalities and ensuring the best opportunity for all individuals.
- Impact of meeting the needs of adult learners in the community including those most disadvantaged and hard to engage.
- Apprentices achieve in a timely way and progress to paid employment with relevant skills knowledge and behaviours.

Quality Strategy

We will continue to improve and enhance the quality of the learner experience by monitoring, reviewing and putting in place actions and support to continuously improve the quality of our teaching, assessment and learning to further raise standards. To do this we will:

- Provide a Quality Assurance Framework which will ensure outstanding provision across the curriculum and student facing business and professional support areas of the College.
- Ensure timely intervention and support for areas of underperformance using the Performance Review and Curriculum Review processes and associated activity to support and develop practice.
- Set and monitor aspirational and challenging targets through agreed KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for types of provision and at curriculum area level, as well as for quality of teaching.
- Adhere to a planned programme of support and challenge review activities and quality reviews as detailed within the Quality Assurance framework
- Promote the sharing of identified good practice and continuous improvement strategies across the provision.
- Provide an efficient and effective examination service ensuring that student achievement is collated and recorded in a timely manner.
- Ensure effective response to external quality monitoring agencies and external awarding body verification activities.
- Effectively and accurately measure College in-year performance and act on results.
- Robust quality assurance processes are in place to ensure equality of opportunity to reduce any achievement gaps for disadvantaged learners and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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- Effectively capture and analyse student, apprentice and employer and stakeholder feedback to proactively support continuous improvement activities and the delivery of outstanding provision.

Quality Assurance Framework – Operational Aims

- SAR – ensure a robust, timely and bottom-up approach to self-assessment reports (SARs) to inform focused Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs).
- At least termly performance reviews of all curriculum areas against high level KPIs including operational and quality of delivery and which feed in to the QIP reviews.
- Ensure the annual calendar of quality review activity is delivered and that key dates for monitoring activities and reporting on performance is known and understood.
- Ensure timely and accurate quality monitoring reports to executive and governors is planned and delivered with actions recorded.
- Regular consultation and surveys of partners, employers, learners and staff informs the strategy.
- Ensure robust policy and procedure for the assessment and measuring the quality of teaching and learning assessment.
- Ensure all associated policies and procedures are kept up to date and support aims of this strategy.

We will achieve this through:

- Planned programme of performance management** including the calanderising of Performance Reviews led by the Deputy Principal and executive colleagues in finance, quality and MIS
- Quality and TLA Reviews, and sampling activity** are led by the Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success with Curriculum Assistant Principals and Heads of Section/Curriculum.
- Monitor and act on Key Performance Indicators.** This includes those set at curriculum level and whole college level which are reviewed through the Performance Reviews and Quality Reviews. Accurate data is used to support and challenge and this activity informs the QIP and any support or action.
- Timely support and intervention for at risk areas of provision.** Use the College's self-assessment process and data review to identify underperforming areas of provision and to utilise the quality review activities to support, monitor and identify areas at risk of underperformance. Heads and teams will be supported in developing and implementing improvement activity.

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- **Continuous Professional Development and staff training and development** is paramount and is a planned programme in response to SAR and QIP, and individual or College need is planned and delivered. Impact is measured and reviewed to inform future planning.
- **Ensure effective teaching and learning through sharing of best practice and contribution** through formal and informal routes. Build a team of teaching, learning and assessment champions who can support others, drive peer review and open-door teaching and who have opportunity to develop their own skills, to innovate and capture best or impactful practice and to help lead the College's quality experience.
- **Ensure effective response to external quality monitoring agencies** by organising and supporting cross College responses to external agencies, including Ofsted and Awarding Bodies ensuring positive outcomes.
- **Monitoring and Review of the Quality Strategy.** The Quality Strategy will be subject to regular review by the Executive and Senior Leadership Teams and the Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee reporting to the full Governing Body.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The **Board** is responsible for approving the College's Quality Improvement Strategy on an annual basis
- The **Learning, Quality & Curriculum Committee (LQCC)** monitors and considers the effectiveness of the College's Quality Improvement Strategy, and provides assurance to the Board.
- The **Senior Vice Principal** is responsible for developing the Quality Improvement Strategy, and reporting on progress to the Board and LQCC. The Senior Vice Principal is responsible for developing an annual work plan to support the implementation of this Quality Strategy
- The **Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success** is responsible for implementing the strategy
- The **Executive Team** monitors the College's financial, business, and academic performance, shaping policies that guide strategic and operational management, and ensuring that managers take the necessary actions identified through quality and performance reviews to drive continuous improvement and achieve successful outcomes.
- The **Senior Leadership and Curriculum Management teams** support the Quality Strategy by scrutinising departmental academic performance, identifying actions and sharing good practice. They provide detailed analysis of departmental quality and performance to inform and drive quality improvement.

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- **Heads of Section/Curriculum** drive quality by ensuring accountability for learner outcomes within their curriculum area, supported by senior leaders and the executive team. Through regular quality and performance meetings, they review performance metrics such as retention, attendance, progress, achievement, and learner voice, addressing underperformance quickly and working with staff to enhance the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment.
- **Learners** shape quality improvement through learner voice activities, led by the Assistant Principal for Student Services. Their voice is represented at every level, from course representatives, Student Council, to learner surveys and Board of Governor membership. This ensures regular consultation, meaningful feedback, and direct influence on the management and improvement of their learning experience.

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Quality Framework 2025/26

Activity	Person(s) Responsible	Purpose
1. Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Plans	Senior Vice Principal Deputy Principal Curriculum Management Team	<p>An annual process intended to assess strengths and areas for improvement across all areas in the College. The Self-Assessment Review and Report is structured to reflect all key aspects in the Education Inspection Framework. The report is accompanied by a Strategic Quality Improvement Plan (QiP) which is monitored through the year at regular intervals to assess progress against priorities contained in the strategic plan. The Senior Leadership Team, Governors and external critical friends assist in the validation of the judgements.</p> <p>The Self-Assessment Report is submitted to external body for moderation and validation. It is shared with Governors for review then approval and made available to key stakeholders including the Department for Education and Inspectorates.</p> <p>Key judgements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Education • Behaviour and Attitudes • Personal Development • Leadership and Management • Sub judgement of L&M and Quality on skills measure <p>For 2026/27 this will use the new Ofsted framework published September 2025.</p>

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		The QIP for 2025/26 will utilise the new Ofsted framework set against the context, 16 judgement areas, 5 point grading scale, and the 4 overarching themes of Leadership and Governance, Inclusion, Safeguarding and Skills.
2. Performance Review Process	Deputy Principal Senior Vice Principal Executive Director HR & OD Executive Director Finance, IT & Resources Director Information Services, Funding & Exams	Termly Performance Reviews assess the in-year operation including efficiency, budget, capital and quality of provision reviewing a range of quality indicators including outcomes for the observations of teaching, learning and assessment, learning walks, stakeholder surveys, in-year retention, attendance and predicted outcomes. The Reviews evaluate the progress students are making across all provision and feeds into QIP and other performance management processes.
3. Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Senior Vice Principal Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success	Observations of teaching, learning and assessment contribute significantly towards forming a judgement on whether teaching, learning and assessment are effective in supporting students' progression and positive outcomes. The College's Learning Visit Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment procedure and cycle is to encourage an 'open door' culture to support managers and staff in driving forward improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. The College has developed and implemented a Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy which identifies 7 key building blocks, and Rosenshine's evidential approach by which to identify areas of strength and those for further improvement; utilising excellent teachers to lead and progress the College's work in this area. The overview of this activity is set

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		out in the procedure and each eligible staff member is observed at least once a year as we continue on our journey to improved quality. There is a defined procedure for those on probation and those needing further support to improve. Following all observations areas of strength and development are recorded and associated development plans and if appropriate support is agreed and implemented. Good practice is shared across teams and provision to further enhance teaching, learning and assessment across different type of provision.
4. Themed Learning Walks and Learner Talks	<p>Senior Vice Principal</p> <p>Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success</p> <p>Assistant Principal Student Support</p>	<p>Learning Walks, supported by learner talks, provide a focused way for teachers, trainers, assessors and leaders to engage in constructive and developmental professional dialogue that directly informs improvements in the learning experience. Themed Learning Walks are carried out across four priority areas (1. Induction, Safeguarding, Prevent and Attendance; 2. Skills for Progression and Industry; 3. Impact of enrichment, enhancement, WEX and Careers; 4. Recall, retrieval, feedback and next steps), through a combination of announced and unannounced visits. These will also be supplemented by Tutorial learning walks and talks. A high volume of walks will be completed to ensure clear themes and patterns emerge, which are then used to inform action and drive improvements. This approach supports an 'open door' culture where colleagues feel confident in contributing to and sharing good practice, both within their teams and across the organisation. The Learning Walk programme is led by the Assistant Principal for Teaching, Learning and Student Success, with walks undertaken by the management team. The outcomes are analysed to identify trends and inform targeted professional development, with findings and impact reported to evidence progress and improvement across the year.</p>

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5. Internal Quality Assurance and Assessment	<p>Senior Vice Principal</p> <p>Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success</p> <p>Curriculum Assistant Principals/Campus Principals</p>	<p>The College operates a robust Internal Assurance Policy covering all types of provision to secure the quality and accuracy of assessment. Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) sample planning, assessment decisions and marking, using RARPA principles, across all provision types. Each Head of Section/Curriculum Lead maintains an IQA schedule and tracking documentation. Internal Verifiers are required to hold appropriate Level 3 or 4 qualifications where required. Rigorous assessment is central to student success, and the IQA process ensures consistency, fairness and accuracy. Standardisation meetings are held regularly, monitored by Assistant/Campus Principals, to promote consistency across teams. The Quality Team undertakes reviews to evaluate effectiveness, with outcomes reported to Senior Leaders, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement.</p>
6. External Quality Assurance	<p>Senior Vice Principal</p> <p>Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success</p> <p>Curriculum Assistant Principals/Campus Principals</p>	<p>Validating organisations apply their own compliance and quality assurance processes, typically through an external moderator or quality assurer who will either visit the College or request samples of learner work. Their role is to confirm compliance with awarding body regulations and evaluate the robustness of internal systems. In cases of unsatisfactory outcomes, external moderators have the authority to recommend that verification or future enrolments be suspended. Following each visit, a report is submitted to the College and forwarded to the Quality Department, which monitors required actions and progress. Reports are RAG-rated (red/amber/green), with the Quality and Standards Manager responsible for ensuring timely updates, supported by the Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success. The Quality Team reviews awarding</p>

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		organisation recommendations on a risk basis, sharing updates and good practice. This work is overseen by the Quality and Standards Manager.
7. Stakeholder Satisfaction Surveys	<p>Senior Vice Principal</p> <p>Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success</p> <p>Assistant Principal Student Support</p>	<p>The College takes capturing stakeholder voice seriously, with this used to drive further quality improvement. There is a structured schedule of student surveys carried out each year across all provision types at set times; these are managed by the Quality and Standards Manager. These cover 16–18 and 19+ learners on full-time and part-time programmes, apprentices, employers and parents. Surveys provide valuable feedback to managers to support quality improvement and are scheduled on the College Quality Calendar. Actions arising from survey outcomes are captured through the Quality and Curriculum Performance Review process, self-assessment reports, and departmental Quality Improvement Plans. Induction, on-programme and end of programme surveys are undertaken across all curriculum areas, supplemented by focus groups that provide deeper insights to inform planning. Surveys also measure the effectiveness of student-facing support services, informing further enhancements to the overall student experience.</p>
8. Annual Quality Cycle	<p>Senior Vice Principal</p> <p>Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success</p>	<p>A comprehensive cycle of quality activities throughout the academic year that proactively monitor the quality of education across all types of provision and include a schedule of Quality Reviews activities including the review of student progress, target setting, effectiveness of internal quality assurance and student voice outcomes. The Quality Cycle encompasses all stages of the student journey and proactively assesses the quality of provision being delivered. Performance against targets and the impact of improvement planning activities are regularly tested, reviewed and reported.</p>

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9. Governor Scrutiny	Board of Governors Learners, Quality and Curriculum Committee CEO and Principal	The College's governors provide robust oversight of the Quality Strategy by reviewing key performance indicators, curriculum outcomes, and quality assurance reports. They challenge leadership on standards of teaching, learning, and assessment, monitor progress against improvement plans, and ensure that student outcomes, learner experience, and compliance with regulatory expectations are consistently achieved. Regular reporting cycles, including termly updates, enable governors to hold leaders to account and support continuous improvement across all areas of provision.
10. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Deputy Principal Senior Vice Principal Director Information Services, Funding & Exams	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to provide clear benchmarks for success, drive accountability, and inform strategic and operational decision-making. Targets include retention, pass and achievement rates, attendance, progression, and learner feedback. Relevant staff have KPIs embedded in their appraisal and development plans to align individual performance with college objectives. Reporting software is used across the College to monitor performance data, with regular reports provided to Curriculum Teams, the Senior Leadership Team, and Governors. The Director Information Services, Funding & Exams ensures the accuracy, validity, and timely reporting of this data.
11. Quality Board/Academic Board	Senior Vice Principal Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success	Quality and Academic Boards are strategic meetings designed to support regulation readiness across the College. They bring together managers and key speakers to review provision and judgement types, assess the impact of current practices, and set targeted actions. An Ofsted Action Plan has been developed to guide improvements and ensure accountability for the new framework. KPIs for each provision type are reviewed, evaluated, and actioned, linking strategic oversight to operational improvement and driving continuous enhancement of teaching, learning, and student outcomes.

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12. Distance Travelled/Value Added	<p>Senior Vice Principal</p> <p>Assistant Principal Teaching, Learning and Student Success</p> <p>Curriculum Assistant Principals/Campus Principals</p> <p>Director of English and maths</p>	<p>In-year data for vocational and English and maths programmes is recorded on a half-termly basis to monitor student progress against target grades. Predicted achievement data from PAAW weeks and mock assessments is used to track in-year progress and predicted outcomes, ensuring timely intervention strategies can be implemented to support students in meeting or exceeding their minimum target grades. Outcomes are reported to the Senior Leadership Team and reviewed at the termly Curriculum Performance Review.</p> <p>The MIS team also considers value-added data for Level 3 students on selected courses, assessing progress from their starting points to determine whether the College has enabled students to achieve higher outcomes than initially predicted.</p>
13. Progression and Destination reporting	<p>Deputy Principal</p> <p>Assistant Principal Curriculum and Partnerships</p> <p>Director Information Services, Funding & Exams</p>	<p>The College monitors and records student destinations to ensure the effectiveness of curriculum intent and implementation. Intended destinations are captured before course completion, and actual destinations for Level 3 students are confirmed through UCAS data. Sustained destinations are reviewed six months post-completion, including apprenticeships, where impact is measured in terms of promotion etc.</p> <p>Destination data is analysed, and reported to the Senior Leadership Team and Governors at key points in the year. This analysis informs curriculum planning, ensuring programmes provide the skills, knowledge, and attitudes students need to achieve positive outcomes. The College aims for all learners to secure meaningful destinations, encouraging applications to leading employers, industry-relevant roles, or Russell Group universities where appropriate.</p>

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Acceptance of Strategy

Signed: _____ (CEO & Principal)

Signed: _____ (Chair of the Corporation)

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