

INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS & TECHNICAL EDUCATION AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting Title	Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Meeting Date	16 September 2021
Protective marking	Official
Board members present	Jennifer Coupland (JCou); Dame Fiona Kendrick (FK); Toby Peyton-Jones (TPJ) – Chair
Independent committee members present	Professor Martin Doel (MD)
Institute officials present	Peter Schild (PSch), Rachel Cooper (RC) – to <i>strategic risk item only</i>
Other stakeholders present	Catherine Andrews, GIAA (CA); Jennifer Dorrell, NAO (JD), Jayne Graham (GIAA), Tika Khan, ESFA
Apologies	None

Welcome, introductions and declarations of interest

1. Toby Peyton Jones (the Chair) welcomed committee members and participating officials to the meeting.
2. The Chair asked committee members whether they had any declarations of interest to make. All committee members recognised that should a potential or actual conflict arise by virtue of their other interests (outlined in the declaration of interests) then it must be raised at the outset of the relevant meeting which deals with the issue giving rise to the actual or potential conflict. No conflicts were declared for this meeting.

3. Arrangements for reporting and handling of data, fraud or whistleblowing incidents were noted.

Minutes and actions from the 17 June 2021 meeting

4. The committee approved the minutes from the meeting held on 17 June 2021. It noted the resolution of actions recorded. It agreed to close an outstanding action on the Institute's corporate policies as positive progress had been made on the corporate policies register.

Follow up of audit actions

5. ARAC noted a summary overview of the level of progress against audit recommendations outstanding from 2019-2020 (GIAA and NAO reviews), and 2020-2021 (GIAA). The Institute would continue to pursue progress on the committee's behalf, providing rolling updates at each meeting.
6. From the 2019-20 audit plan, two recommendations on the funding band strategy refresh were now due to be completed by March 2022. Following the 2020-21 audit of apprenticeships, trailblazers and route panels, work was in progress to resolve one recommendation. From the 2020-21 T-Levels contract management audit, two recommendations were in the process of being resolved.

Risks – strategic overview and update

7. The corporate risk register was noted. The Institute executive team had undertaken a horizon scanning risk exercise in late July. The purpose had been to review and identify risks aligned against the Institute's strategic priorities. ARAC members commended this initiative which followed the strategy refresh. Outputs had informed refreshed corporate risks at management level. ARAC members encouraged the use of this work and recommended the Institute team keep its emphasis on the Institute's role in building a more coherent skills system, with focus on the Institute-level risks across that systemic work.

Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) report

8. Good progress against the agreed GIAA 2021-22 audit plan was noted. 50% work on the agreed plan had commenced. Terms of reference had been issued on risk

management and commercial arrangements audits. Work on governance and the assurance framework was to follow.

9. ARAC received GIAA's final 2021-22 advisory report on Institute 2021, the organisational restructure. GIAA reported on the future-facing activities to be followed through to release the Institute 2021's full set of benefits. The auditor highlighted this final work for the Institute to assure itself that the intended outcomes had been delivered and documentation was complete.
10. ARAC received for information GIAA cross government insights covering grants; cyber security; data governance; diversity and inclusion; quality assurance and improvement programme; and technical resources for ARAC members.

National Audit Office (NAO report)

11. NAO had certified the 2020-21 audit of the annual report and accounts after the 17 June ARAC meeting, in time for the laying of the report before Parliament.
12. In 2021-22 Ernst & Young would be rotating in as external auditor under NAO's continuing directorship. ARAC welcomed the continuity the NAO oversight offered.
13. ARAC noted NAO's wider publications. It accepted a list of recently published value for money and insight reports, together with a list of topics being prepared.
14. ARAC welcomed the insights offered in the NAO's June 2021 report on Government's delivery through arm's-length bodies. It was felt that findings could be translated into good practice.

Finance report

15. ARAC accepted the in-year financial position and 2022-23 finance forward look report. In-year funding which could be released because of one-off Covid-related non-recurrent underspends had been returned to DfE.

Deep dive – T Level system risk

16. ARAC noted a deep dive into T Level system risk. The wider T Levels programme sits across DfE, the Institute and Ofqual. DfE retain overall responsibility for policy, provider support and the T Level Industry Placement (IP). The Institute is responsible for the development and approval of the Technical Qualification that sits within the T Level. ARAC members indicated that the Institute board should be made aware of the relatively restricted Institute role and the limitations this placed upon Institute control of wider risks.

Feedback from most recent ALB ARAC chairs' meeting

17. The Chair reported back on the most recent DfE meeting for arm's-length bodies ARAC chairs. Risks associated with cyber security and innovation continued to dominate the conversation.

ARAC 2021-22 agenda's forward look

18. The committee noted the updated 2021-22 forward plan. ARAC participants valued this tool and the space for deep dives that had been created, enabling risk and assurance topics to be more fully examined. Closer looks at the assurance framework and business continuity were planned. An HTQ deep dive should be built into the forward look.

19. The forward plan should include advance time built in for the informal review of the Annual Report and Accounts prior to the ARAC meeting charged with final sign off.

20. ARAC members would consider the possibility of returning to face to face meetings when the time was right. The meeting length could be revisited and extended according to the demands of the agenda.

Any other business

21. There was no other business.

Next committee meeting

22. The next meeting of the committee would take place on 9 December 2021 at 11.00 hrs.

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