

## OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Date: 10:30-12:00, 12 December 2022

### 1.1 Welcome and introduction

Peter Mucklow welcomed all members to the meeting

### 1.2 Approval of minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and no further action points to be addressed.

## 2 General updates

Peter Mucklow provided a brief update on developments in apprenticeships and technical education since the last meeting of the Quality Alliance on 11 October. He noted that driving up apprenticeship quality remained a key priority for the Department for Education and that the Quality Alliance had a key role to play in setting the strategic direction for such improvements.

It was also noted that IfATE would be publishing its consultation on reforms to the criteria and approach taken to mandating qualifications in apprenticeships in the coming days (published on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December). The news of the upcoming consultation was warmly received by the Quality Alliance.

## 3 Thematic discussion – Quality in apprenticeship provision

The Quality Alliance was invited to consider a jointly presented item by Ofsted and the DFE on improving quality in apprenticeship provision. Introducing the item, the Quality Alliance was provided with some contextual information on the size and make-up of the apprenticeship provider market as well as some key headline findings of the 2021/22 Ofsted inspections of apprenticeship delivery (as published on 13 December in its [annual report](#)).

In discussion, the following key points were made:

- There would be merit in considering the effectiveness of the overall system of quality management to ensure that sufficient tools were available to both incentivise excellence as well as tackling, potentially financially, poor performance and outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged and under-represented groups.
- To promote better outcomes and greater professionalism in apprenticeship delivery, there needed to be greater investment in both support for teachers and to address shortages where they exist.
- Looking at only the teaching of the training element of an apprenticeship would only represent a small aspect of the overall apprenticeship learning experience. It was important that the quality of a programme also considered the time spent with the employer, the process of onboarding a new apprentice as well as pastoral, mentor-type support (as that had recently been identified by the Edge Foundation as having the greatest single impact on apprenticeship completion rates).

- The pandemic had made significant changes to the way in which apprenticeship training was being delivered and the expectations and requirements of employers and apprentices. Whilst the extent of online or virtual learning needed to reflect the requirements of each apprenticeship, it was neither likely nor preferable in many cases to return to pre-pandemic approaches. It would be important however to understand and share examples of where online training was being delivered excellently and meeting the needs of apprentices and employers.

Summing up the discussion, Peter Mucklow thanked attendees for their thoughtful input to the discussion. He noted that providing apprenticeship training providers with access specimen training plans, support in developing excellence in online delivery and access to support to improve workforce development were key priorities for the DfE. He noted that quality apprenticeships were a vital part of promoting social mobility and noted that an update report on potential impact measures would be brought to a future Quality Alliance meeting.

**AP1** – a update item on improving the quality of online apprenticeship training delivery to be brought to a future Quality Alliance meeting **(DFE)**

**AP2** – an update on work to develop a range of impact measures for apprenticeships to be brought to a future meeting **(DFE)**

#### **4 Apprenticeship Panel - annual survey results**

Introducing the item, Jonathan Mitchell provided Quality Alliance members with a summary of the responses to the recent apprentice panel annual survey. Jonathan noted that the survey only represented a small section of the apprentice population (just over 2000 responses) but provided some useful insights into the areas apprentices wanted to see improved. He also noted that the results provided some encouraging feedback from respondents about their experiences and the relevance of their training to their future career aspirations.

In summing up a short discussion, Peter Mucklow noted that the results were positive and highlighted that there were clearly aspects of the apprenticeship programme which were working really well. He noted that it would be important to consider the role of onboarding of new apprentices in the overall experience and how to ensure that the commitment statement was used effectively. As part of this, it would be important to consider the naming convention of the product to ensure there was no confusion on its purpose.

There was also an open invitation given to Quality Alliance members to consider using the apprentice panel as a consultative opportunity on planned changes or initiatives.

**AP3** – to consider the consistency of naming conventions in relation to the commitment statement and/or training plans in relation to apprenticeships **(DFE/IfATE)**

#### **5 AOB**

##### **Next meeting**

10:00 – 11:30, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 - theme: quality in assessment

