INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS & TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD

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| Meeting Title | Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education Board |
| Meeting Date | 23 March 2022 |
| Protective marking | Official |
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| Board members present | Kate Barclay (KB), Dayle Bayliss (DB), John Cope (JCop), Jennifer Coupland (JCou), Dame Fiona Kendrick (FK), Jessica Leigh Jones (JLJ), Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith (the Chair) (RMS), Robin Millar (RM), Toby Peyton-Jones (TPJ), Bev Robinson (BR) |
| Institute officials present | Beth Chaudhary (BC), Rachel Cooper (RC), Kristofer McGhee (KM), Rob Nitsch (RN)  |
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| Apologies | Paul Cadman (PC), Malcolm Press (MP) |

**Welcome and Introductions/declarations of interest**

1. Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith (the Chair) welcomed board members and participating officials to the meeting.
2. There were apologies from Paul Cadman (PC) and Malcolm Press (MP).
3. The Chair asked board members whether they had any declarations of interest to make. All board 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 interests were declared for this meeting.

**Strategic Risk Management Update**

1. The Institute was exploring the potential impact of the Russia – Ukraine conflict on its work. There were a number ways that the conflict could have an effect including: increasing cyber security threats, reducing businesses capacity to support the development of the skills system and willingness to invest in skills, as well as reputation impacts for the Institute regarding links to Russia within our supply chain or within the employer partners we work with. The recommendation was made to consider the impact on staff as well in case anyone was directly affected by it. A paper is being prepared for ARAC to assess our approach and consider whether changes are needed to the strategic risk register.
2. The Board was pleased to hear that wellbeing support is being provided to staff. One of the areas where support is being given is to parents who may have to explain the conflict to their children.
3. The Chair provided details of a hoax email that had recently been sent to colleagues and the potential effect on civil servants. JC assured the Board that the Institute was following Department guidance for civil servants.
4. There was also a discussion about the risk of staff using social media to share their personal views.

**Feedback from the Committee Chairs**

ARAC

1. TPJ provided an update on the work that the committee had done since the last meeting. A series of audits had been carried out, and the majority of them received moderate findings.
2. The Board agreed with the committee’s recommendation to make the risk heatmap a standing item for future Board meetings.

A&FC

1. This was the last meeting of the committee. KB thanked the members for their work at the meetings.
2. The committee discussed the outcomes of their deep dive of the Route Panels. In the main the Panels were operating effectively, but there was room for improvement. One of the areas of concern was that some of the Panels did not have a very diverse membership.
3. The committee also suggested that the Route Panels collaborated with the assessment panel. It was felt that it would be good as the members were younger and so could provide a fresh perspective.
4. The committee had a productive conversation about communications. A lot of work had been done to improve the T Level qualifications and so it was seen as important that this was socialised effectively. The same was said about the HTQ programme.

EDI Committee

1. This was the first committee meeting. RM was pleased that the committee had been established as it publicised the work that had been carried out to address the diversity and inclusion agenda.
2. The first meeting set out the plans for upcoming meetings and there was also an introduction to the three objectives for the committee:
3. People – The committee will work with special interest groups to find opportunities to promote the diversity and inclusion agenda
4. Products – An equity, diversity and inclusion framework will be developed and the committee will explore ways to make EDI part of the culture.
5. Policy – A new communications plan was being developed as a gateway to influence. RM stated that the committee had an important part to play in the promotion of diversity and inclusion and wanted to make sure that they worked with other groups in the department.
6. RM invited the CEO of a Go2Games to do a presentation about coaching and mentoring people from disadvantaged communities. The aim of the organisation is to provide opportunities for them to get involved in pre-apprenticeships.
7. RM stated that more local entrepreneurs will be invited to future meetings.
8. KB felt that it would be good for the committee to have meetings with the other committees to discuss the EDI agenda.

QAC

1. This was the last meeting of the QAC. Three of the members would be joining the Assessment Panel.
2. The Board was advised of the issue with one of the training providers working with the Institute. The two parties have corresponded and there was concern about the tone of the letters received. The Committee was concerned that the Secretary of State would be contacted if an agreement was not made.
3. The committee agreed to draft a letter to the training provider, outlining their position, and to invite them to have a meeting with representatives from the QAC to discuss their positions.
4. Representatives from the QAA and OfS attended the meeting and talked about the issues that they had with the data used. They stated that the poor data quality meant that no quality assurance exercises had been carried out. The committee was concerned about this and recommended that they start one as soon as possible.
5. The committee also agreed that a letter would be drafted to the ESFA to let them know about the intention to transfer the risk about data to them.

**Apprentice Panel Update**

1. The Board welcomed the new Apprentice Panel lead and the members, who provided highlights of the work that had been done since their last update in September 2021.
2. A new Chair had been appointed to the panel and they appointed a new lead. Work was also being carried out to appoint new members. The Board was asked for assistance, and the Board agreed to reach out to their networks to see if they could gather interest.
3. The Board was pleased to hear about the networking events that the Panel attended. This included holding their first in-person meeting in October 2021, and there was also a meeting with the Minster for women to talk about more opportunities for women in STEM.
4. The apprentice survey was launched on 7 February 2022, at the start of National Apprentice Week. To date there were 1700 responses to questions about health and wellbeing. The Panel aimed to get 2000 responses by the time the survey closes on 8 April 2022.
5. The Board was asked to consider ways in which they could increase the Panel’s influence.
6. The Panel members were asked whether there were any plans to create an alumni for past apprentices. Although those who complete their apprenticeships were no longer names as such, the Panel had started work on this project.

**Revised Governance Framework with Scheme of Delegation**

1. The Board was asked to approve the Governance Framework and Scheme of Delegation, following the update done after consultation with the Board.
2. The changes made reflect the recommendations made by the Board and were consistent with governance best practice.
3. The document was updated with details of the new committee structure and their Terms of Reference. The A&FC and QAC were disbanded, to be replaced by APAC.
4. The changes proposed to the Scheme of Delegation would create a greater level of delegation to the Executive team, so that the Board could have greater capacity to focus on the Institute’s strategy.
5. The Board approved the changes to the Governance Framework and the Schedule of Delegation, subject to a review being carried out between 9 and 12 months.

**Digital Strategy**

1. The Board was informed of the progress that had been made to the Digital Strategy since the last meeting and was asked to endorse the changes made.
2. Even though progress had been made, there were still issues to overcome. One of the main issues revolved around data. The quality and the shape of the data made it difficult to work with.
3. The Board was concerned about the clarity of the project. It was felt that the overall outcome had not been defined. The Board wanted to know:
* The level of investment needed
* What returns were anticipated, and
* How it would link in with other projects
1. The Board wanted to get more details about the delivery of the project. The Chair felt that these issues need to be addressed before any consideration could be given to employ the services of a provider.
2. JC stated that the Institute has a data warehouse with lots of valuable information. But the data was not easy to interrogate.
3. The Board felt that further information about the needs of the Institute before going out to tender for an external partner.

**Forward Plan**

1. The Strategy Directors stated that this was the first iteration of the forward plan, and the Board was asked to note and endorse the process of forward planning.
2. The aims of the plan included simplifying governance to improve its agility, and getting staff aligned and involved in the process.
3. This activity was linked to the strategy day that took place before the meeting and the Chair stated that this was a productive event.
4. To continue the momentum, the Chair wanted to hold a further session with JC and the Strategy Directors.
5. The Chair recommended that the Strategic Directors drafted a full specification and what the ideal would look like. RC agreed with the recommendation and understood that time would be needed to get to the best position.

**Matters Arising from the Papers for Information**

1. The Board asked for a definition of term ‘skills gap’ on the HR dashboard. PS stated that this was in reference to certain competencies that could be improved.
2. The Board also wanted to know what was meant by the use of the term, ‘cultural empowerment’.
3. The Board was also interested to find out how staff members felt about working at the Institute and whether they felt like part of the culture. A recommendation was made to carry out a review of staff opinions and to find out how staff could be further encouraged to feel like they are all working toward the same aim.

**Any Other Business**

1. The Chair acknowledged that this was the last meeting for TPJ and MP and expressed her and the Board’s thanks for their contributions.

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