

MINUTES

INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS & TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD

Meeting Title	Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education Board
Meeting Date	13 July 2022
Protective marking	Official
Board members present	Dr Kate Barclay (KB); Dayle Bayliss (DB); John Cope (JCop) (items 1 – 10); Jennifer Coupland (JCou); Sir Peter Estlin (PE) (via Teleconference); Jessica Leigh Jones MBE (JLJ) (via Teleconference); Dame Fiona Kendrick (FK) (via Teleconference) (items 1 – 4); Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith CBE (the Chair) (RMS); Robin Millar CBE (RM) (via Teleconference); Neil Morrison (NM); Professor Malcolm Press CBE (MP) (via Teleconference); Bev Robinson OBE (BR) (via Teleconference).
Institute officials present	Beth Chaudhary, Strategy Director (BC); Dr Rachel Cooper, Strategy Director (RC); Rob Nitsch CBE, Delivery Director (RN); Kristofer McGhee, General Counsel (KM); Avril Cooper, HR Director (AC); Head of Finance (items 5 and 11) (MC); Senior Portfolio Manager (item 6) (AS); Carmel Grant, Deputy Director for Commissioning and Development (items 8 and 9) (CG); IfATE Head of Occupations Policy (item 10) (EY);
Other stakeholders present	Sue Lovelock, DfE Director for Professional and Technical Education (item 5) (SL); Karen Riley, DfE Deputy Director for Apprenticeship Quality (KR) (via Teleconference); DfE Unit for Future Skills (item 10) (FB and EE).
Apologies	None

Item 1: Welcome and Introductions/declarations of interest

1. Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith (the Chair) welcomed board members and participating officials to the meeting.
2. No apologies were received.
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. The Chair advised the board that she had been appointed to the House of Lords Industry and Regulators Select Committee and that whilst this did not currently present a conflict of interest, there may be a potential conflict of interest in future depending on the work programme of the Committee. The potential conflict was noted for information. The Chair agreed to raise any actual or potential conflicts, as the case may be in future, in respect of this appointment.

Item 2: Minutes and actions from the last meeting

4. The minutes from the last meeting, on 24 May 2022, were agreed.

Item 3: Feedback from the Committee Chairs

ARAC

5. Sir Peter Estlin reported that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had met once since the last board meeting, the first meeting to be held with PE as Committee Chair.
6. The board was advised that the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) had issued a moderate opinion in terms of assurance which reflected good performance and positive feedback from both GIAA and the National Audit Office. PE noted that the Assurance Map developed by the Audit and Assurance Team was of high quality, and

hoped this would assist in working toward a substantial assurance opinion.

7. PE advised the board that the Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22 had been laid before Parliament by the deadline of 30 June 2022.

APAC

8. Kate Barclay reported that the Approvals Policy and Assurance Committee had met once since the last board meeting. The agenda was focused on quality, and included consideration of DfE's quality strategy and its impact; IfATE's Quality Cycle; EQA Transition; and a discussion with the chair of the new Assessment Panel to provide an update on the Panel's work.
9. The board noted that the responsibilities for quality across the apprenticeships and technical education landscape were complex and that it was important to understand the discrete remits of different organisations whilst having regard to the overall quality of the apprentice/learner experience.
10. The Committee would meet again on 30 August 2022 with a focus on apprenticeships and T Levels.
11. The board noted the updates provided by the Committee Chairs.

Item 4: CEO update

12. Jennifer Coupland reported that a decision had been taken to delay the Animal Care Management T Level to provide additional time to reflect on the T Level and how it fits in with other occupations and pathways.
13. Good press coverage had been achieved following an increasing number of site visits. These had been successful in raising the profile of IfATE, apprenticeships and technical education. JCou had also attended the launch of the 2021-22 annual report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Apprenticeships.
14. JCou advised that IfATE had been monitoring office attendance on an ongoing basis.

The latest occupancy statistics were approximately 25%, but this was in the context of additional site visits, increasing Covid infections and transport disruptions. Staff based at sites where IfATE has a low presence were being encouraged and supported to travel to the main sites where appropriate, to provide additional opportunities for cross-team working and ensure maximum benefit from their time in the office.

15. The Chair expressed confidence that office attendance would rise in time, and noted the importance and benefit of teams working in closer proximity. The board noted the CEO update.

Item 5: Responding to the Civil Service headcount reduction

16. IfATE had been asked to provide an assessment of the likely impact of headcount reductions at different rates, in line with the overall drive to reduce the Civil Service headcount by 20%/91,000 posts. IfATE had worked to a baseline of staff numbers implicit in the 22/23-24/25 Spending Review settlement, which had assumed growth during the early part of the Spending Review period.
17. The board was advised that a headcount reduction of 20% might be achieved through a number of efficiencies and reprogramming some work until the next Spending Review period, and that more extreme scenarios in the order of 30-40% would impinge significantly on IfATE's ability to deliver on the breadth and depth of its work. IfATE was maintaining an ongoing dialogue with DfE over the likely level of cut and whether this would be based purely on headcount or whether the financial cost was also a factor, but no confirmation was yet available. IfATE's senior leadership were making as much information as possible available to IfATE staff.
18. The board noted that IfATE was a small proportion of the DfE budget and headcount, but delivered outputs that ranked highly in Ministerial priorities. The board was informed that there was an expectation that different areas of the DfE would be affected by the headcount reduction to differing degrees, but that no area was presently expected to be

exempted.

19. The board noted that the discussions regarding headcount reduction were an opportunity to demonstrate the value of IfATE in delivering the skills agenda.
20. The board was advised that there were several ways to consider the headcount reduction and that discussions would have to take place with the new Ministerial team, but that DfE would be making the strongest possible case to maintain robust investment in skills.
21. Board members discussed the potential effects of End-Point Assessment requirements on apprenticeship completion rates, noting that increasing completion rates had in the past been a Ministerial priority. It was noted that there was not a single reason for an apprentice choosing to leave their apprenticeship prior to completion, but that the reasons varied from person to person.
22. The board noted IfATE's responses to the savings commissions.

Item 6: Strategic platforms and board annual workplan

23. Rachel Cooper outlined four strategic platforms developed from the IfATE 3-year road map: deliver operational excellence; establish IfATE's profile and brand; define and communicate an integrated skills system; and strong leadership of IfATE.
24. Detailed smart metrics had been identified as performance indicators for each of the strategic platforms, and a draft annual workplan was presented to the board along with proposals to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of board meetings. These included refinements to the content of papers and the format and logistics of meetings.
25. The board approved the draft annual workplan and performance indicators, noting that these may evolve over time.

Item 8: T Level learner journey

26. The Board welcomed a T Level student who had recently completed his T Level in Digital

Production, Design and Development and was currently awaiting his results.

27. The student provided an account of how he chose to take the Digital Production, Design and Development T Level and his experiences whilst studying. He stated that following his T Level he wished to undertake an apprenticeship in project management with National Highways and pursue a career in project management.
28. In response to a question on how he found out about the availability of T Levels, he stated that this information was available from his college at an open evening and that he made his decision after further research. He added that T Levels were still not very widely known and that a stronger social media presence might help address this issue.
29. The Board thanked the student for sharing his experiences, and wished him success for his results and future career.

Item 9: T Level delivery update

30. Carmel Grant introduced the item. As indicated earlier in the meeting, a decision had been taken to defer the Animal Care Management T Level to 2024, with providers being notified by DfE during week commencing 18 July 2022. The Agriculture, Land Management & Production T Level remained on track for delivery in 2023. The remaining 6 T Levels in development remained broadly on track and due for completion by the end of the calendar year. IfATE was considering the development of two new T Levels, including one in energy and sustainability.
31. CG provided a general update on the arrangements for summer awarding, and expressed a hope that successful case studies of T Level learning would help promote T Levels to future students. The board noted the importance of employers having confidence that grades issued to students were a fair reflection of competence, and that there was an accurate and defensible set of results.
32. The board asked about the capacity and capability of new Awarding Organisations and

what support was provided to them by IfATE as they joined the T Level delivery programme, and in response were informed that induction took place after contract award with lessons from previous waves shared throughout the development phase. The board were informed that the progression profiles would be integrated into the occupational maps eventually, however, were being shared with AOs and providers in their current form to ensure they were available at the earliest opportunity. The board thanked CG for the update and noted IfATE's approach to promoting T Levels through progression profiles.

Item 10: Unit for Future Skills and IfATE working relationship

33. The board welcomed attendees from the DfE Unit for Future Skills (UFS) and the IfATE Head of Occupations Policy to the meeting. IfATE's recent strategic guidance had requested that IfATE play a greater role in identifying emerging skills and to work in close collaboration with the DfE in this area. The UFS was set up in May with the purpose of improving the quality of the data available to policy makers.
34. UFS explained their role in bringing together the wealth of data already available from disparate sources across government and stakeholders in the skills sector, and that final analysis of data would be conducted by other organisations. The board heard that a website had recently been published, and that a consultation was available for potential users of the data to indicate their preferences in order that UFS could refine the offer.
35. The board thanked presenters from UFS and IfATE for the information provided, and expressed its enthusiasm for the benefits that could be generated by the partnership working. The board requested an update from UFS at a future meeting and a focus on IfATE's work on future skills, drawing on the partnership with UFS.

Item 11: Matters arising from the papers for information

36. The board noted the board actions log, 17 March 2022 ARAC minutes, finance report, people and HR report and board data pack. There were no matters arising.

Item 12: Any other business (AOB)

37. There was no other business, and it was confirmed that the next meeting would be held on 21 September 2022.

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