

MINUTES

Meeting Title: Quality Assurance Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday 21 September 2021, 10:30 – 14:00 hours

Location: Remote

Protective marking Official

Attendance:

Members: Paul Cadman (Chair), Jessica Leigh Jones

Independent Members: Professor Jim Iley, Isabel Sutcliffe

Institute Officials: Nikki Christie

Apologies: Ben Blackledge

1. Welcome, introductions and declarations of interest

- I. The Chair welcomed members and officials to the Quality Assurance Committee (“the committee”) meeting.
- II. 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. Isabel Sutcliffe declared that she has been contracted by Ofqual to carry out a stakeholder engagement project. The chair noted this but was satisfied that there was no actual or potential conflict of interest arising from this relationship for the purpose of this meeting. No other actual or potential conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 July 2021

- III. The committee agreed the minutes from the previous meeting held on 8 July 2021 date as an accurate record.

3. Transition updates on Ofqual and Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) update

- IV. The committee received an update on the process of External Quality Assurance (EQA) transition to Ofqual. Since August 2020 Ofqual has been working on Phase 1 – transferring standards where the Institute is the current EQA provider. Phase 1 transition was extended in April 2021 to December 2021 to allow as much time as possible for End Point Assessment Organisations (EPAOs) to apply for recognition, this resulted in a high volume of applications. Institute officials are encouraging all parties to review and amend their processes to achieve delivery against the December deadline. The Institute is reinforcing and, in conjunction with large stakeholder groups, providing more support for EPAO's that are applying for recognition to help expedite the situation.
- V. The committee endorsed the activities set in train and strongly encouraged all parties involved to consider whether there were any modifications to the process that could accelerate decision making whilst retaining the quality bar.
- VI. The committee supported escalation of the risk to the December 2021 deadline for the attention of the Institute Board.

Action 1

Escalate QAC feedback on Ofqual EQA Transition to the Institute Board.

4. Annual Plan and Office for Students (OfS) update

VII. The committee received an update on the annual delivery plan for both Ofqual and the OfS of what EQA reports we can expect to see and when for the rest of 2021/22, and this will be reviewed regularly. By end of September, Ofqual is expecting to submit 26 EPAO reports across 18 standards onto Qualitas. Qualitas is a CRM system supporting the EQA framework and is used for reporting and data quality purposes.

VIII. OfS have started to recruit the team and a delivery plan will follow. The committee to receive an interim update on Ofqual's progress on EQA delivery. The committee also requested for OfS to join the next QAC meeting to provide an update on the delivery plan and flag any risks and issues.

Action 2

Invite OfS to the next QAC meeting

Action 3

NC to provide the Committee with an interim update on EQA delivery.

5. Update on Covid-19 flexibilities and discretions

IX. The committee received a presentation on Covid-19 flexibilities and discretions from Institute officials. The committee noted the update and asked about simulated environments instead of observations in terms of what criteria a simulated environment needs to meet and as alternative to the workplace. The committee were reassured by the mitigations already in place.

6. Demonstration of the End Point Assessment (EPA) Apprenticeship Builder

- X. The committee received a demonstration on the EPA Apprenticeship Builder from Institute officials. This is a portal that encompasses all stages of the EPA including the proposal, the standard, EPA and funding stages. The portal allows end users including Institute staff and trailblazers to work in a logical manner to ensure all stages of the EPA are completed. The committee welcomed the demonstration.

7. EPAO Grading

- XI. The committee received further information about the types/ tiers of grading available for apprenticeships and what factors and evidence is used to underpin each grade, how the grading is supported, and how discrepancies in grading are dealt with. The committee welcomed the update and requested a further discussion at a future meeting. The committee recommended the Institute to also seek views from the apprenticeship panel on apprenticeship gradings.

Action 4

Arrange a deep dive with the Apprenticeship Panel on apprenticeship gradings

Action 5

Undertake deep dive at a future QAC meeting on apprenticeship gradings

8. Any other business

- XII. It was agreed by the committee to rearrange the Quality Assurance Committee meeting from 18 to 9 November to ensure any updates can be reported to the Institute Board meeting.

9. Papers for information

- XIII. The committee noted two papers for information: (a) the EQA risk register; and (b) EQA dashboard.

10. Next committee meeting

- XIV. The committee noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on 9 November 2021 (remote).