

# MINUTES

## INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS & TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD

**Meeting Title:** Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education Board

**Meeting Date:** 22 September 2021

**Protective marking:** Official

**Board members present:** Kate Barclay (KB), Dayle Bayliss (DB), Paul Cadman (PC), 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), Malcolm Press (MP), Bev Robinson (BR)

**Institute officials present:** Beth Chaudhary (BC), Rachel Cooper (RC), Kristofer McGhee (KMc), Rob Nitsch (RN), Peter Schild (PSch)

**Other stakeholders present:** John Edwards (JE) (ESFA) (to item 3), Peter Mucklow (PM) (ESFA) (to item 6)

**Apologies:** Susan Lovelock (DfE)

### **Welcome and Introductions/declarations of interest**

1. Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith (the Chair) welcomed board members and participating officials to the meeting. The board welcomed the Chair to her first meeting as Chair of the Institute. John Edwards (Interim CEO, ESFA) was introduced.
2. 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. Toby Peyton Jones disclosed his role in the Department for Education review of the Education, Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA). No other interests were declared for this meeting.

### **Minutes from the 14 July 2021 meeting**

3. The board approved the minutes from the 14 July meeting, with no further comments.

### **Performance scorecard, risk, and plans for delivery of Strategic Plan 2021-24**

4. The board noted the performance highlight report which set out the Institute's delivery against objectives and its performance against key milestones to August 2021. Importance was placed on keeping focus on the coverage in the employer directory of standards due for EQA.
5. The vision and delivery plan for the Institute's Strategic Plan 2021-24 was agreed. The Institute would work in partnership with DfE to promote its message. To support the communications plan, the Institute team would prepare a single page summary to convey key messages. This summary would aim to highlight the Institute's timely contribution to areas such as national policy priorities, the Skills for Jobs White Paper, post-Covid recovery and levelling up agenda's. Focus should be given to employer engagement in promoting the Institute's strategic commitments.

### **Feedback from board committee chairs**

6. The board discussed the activities arising from the board committees which had occurred since the July board meeting. Strategic risk monitoring in board committees was discussed. It was agreed that in the future the strategic risk map should be discussed at the start of each board meeting.
7. The Approvals and Funding Committee's 19 August meeting had dealt with Cycle 36 recommendations from route panels. Members had emphasised the importance of learning lessons from the cycle 1 HTQ approvals process for future effectiveness. Approvals and Funding Committee members would continue dialogue with the Institute team to find the best model for decision making for apprenticeship approvals. Within this context, the board reflected upon the need to meet the particular and distinct needs of large and small employer groups. Intelligence about different employers' needs based on data would be applied to develop understanding and narrative. This narrative would be brought to a future board meeting.

8. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) had met on 16 September and received two deep dives: a review of cyber security arrangements; and a deep dive into how T Level risks are being actively managed across the wider T Level Programme working with DfE and Ofqual partners. GIAA's advisory report on the Institute's organisational restructure had highlighted commendable achievement and the importance of documented decision making. The board supported the work of the Institute Data Protection Officer, encouraging good data protection practice supported by training and awareness initiatives across the organisation.
9. The Quality Assurance Committee's 21 September meeting had discussed progress and risk arising in relation to the external quality assurance (EQA) delivery transfer for apprenticeship assessment to Ofqual. The Chair would follow up on this point.

### **Apprentice Panel six monthly report**

10. Members of the Apprentice Panel presented the board with a six months' activity update. Key activities undertaken by the Apprentice Panel since the last update in March 2021 were the production of Raising the Standards (formally Best Practice Guidance), and the start of work to devise the Apprentice Panel survey 2021. Themes and supporting activities were noted. On the routes that individuals follow to secure apprenticeships, Panel members pointed to the importance of social media channels. The board supported the Apprentice Panel's approach, encouraging the Panel to extend the survey to reach HTQ and T Level learners; follow up on the alumni network; use longitudinal data; and find ways to drive up survey participation rates.

### **Developing a digital strategy**

11. The board noted the Institute's outline approach for building the Institute's digital strategy. Steps to deploy automation and digital solutions for managing basic needs and setting the Institute up for the future were explained. A succinct action plan setting out a problem statement would be prepared for a future board meeting. This action plan would highlight the delivery framework and the most significant issues. The board requested that a plan for getting the Institute on to its own digital platform should feature. Board members would feed comments directly into the preparation of this plan.

## **Diversity and inclusion**

12. The board welcomed the Institute's Diversity and Inclusion Network (DIN) Co-Chairs' report, noting activities progressed since its January 2021 presentation to the board. Ongoing championship from the three board members who sponsor the DIN is valued. The board endorsed its ongoing support for the DIN's work, encouraging a demonstration of what membership of the DIN means and how its members experience their working lives at the Institute.
13. The Institute's diversity and inclusion project plans were discussed in the context of the skills agenda. An evidence-based diversity and inclusion delivery road map would be brought to a future meeting. This delivery plan should reflect national levelling up priorities. A distinction should be drawn between the internal agenda and the development of Institute products which were appropriately and culturally sensitive products.
14. The principle of adding a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion board committee to the governance framework was agreed. The intended purpose of this new board committee would be to provide assurance to the board that diversity, equity and inclusion was fully recognised within the Institute's work. Terms of reference would be brought back to the board as a proposal within the refreshed governance framework, and the committee chair would be confirmed.

## **Governance review**

15. Progress against the governance review built upon the direction agreed at the 14 July meeting. The board agreed to adopt four Civil Service Corporate Governance Code principles for boards as a next step to inform the refreshed board operating system. These principles would enable the division of responsibilities between the board and executive. The principles agreed - leadership; effectiveness; accountability; and sustainability – would fully support the board in discharging its responsibilities, allowing for intervention should the need arise. With the principles agreed, proposals on the scheme of delegation would be brought to the 17 November board.
16. A decision to vary delegated authority for HTQ approvals decision making was deferred to the 17 November meeting. This decision would be considered within a full set of proposals for an updated scheme of delegation. This revised scheme of

delegation should incorporate the learning from the board and committee experience to date, with particular reference to learning from decision making on apprenticeships, HTQs and T Levels.

### **Any other business**

17. It was agreed that the structure of board meeting agenda's should be set so that each meeting commenced with a presentation from someone currently undertaking an apprenticeship or technical qualification, followed by a review of strategic risks.
18. Eight papers for information were noted. Minutes were received from board committee meetings: the Approvals and Funding Committee held on 24 June 2021; the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 17 June 2021; and the Quality Assurance Committee held on 26 May 2021. The board also received a technical education update; a finance report; an HR report; a corporate risk update; a data pack; and a summary of arrangements for External Quality Assurance (EQA) of End Point Assessment (EPA). The revised draft 2022 schedule of the proposed board and committee dates was circulated with the papers.

### **Next board meeting**

19. The next meeting of the board would take place on Wednesday 17 November 2021.

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