

MINUTES

Meeting Title	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
Meeting Date	12 May 2022
Protective marking	Official
Board members present	Dayle Bayliss (DB), John Cope (JC), Jessica Leigh Jones (JLJ), Robin Millar (the Chair) (RM)
IfATE officials present	Rachel Cooper (RC), EDI Team (LM, NM, JS, AF, PO)
Other stakeholders present	Matt Foulds, ESFA (MF)

1. Welcome and introductions

- a. The Chair welcomed the members to the meeting.
- b. The Chair suggested the appointment of an accessibility lead in IfATE to ensure that this is embedded across all our governance and wider publication processes.
- c. The Governance team was asked to explore possible programmes that could be used to distribute board papers and provide an update.

2. Questions Arising

- a. The Chair requested a meeting with the newly appointed Director of HR. One of the topics to be discussed would be whether there are escalation processes in place in the event of an issue being raised.
- b. The Committee also requested a regular update about IfATE's work with the government on Diversity and Inclusion matters.
- c. The Committee requested more detail about IfATE's contribution to big ticket issues such as the apprenticeship levy and the levelling up agenda to be included in the Policy and Partnership objective.

3. Revising the EDI Strategy

- a. The Committee was pleased to see progress with the strategy, but there was concern that there was limited detail in the report and questions on whether it was sufficiently ambitious. The objectives were approved, but there was not enough granular information about how they would be delivered.

- b. There was a mutual understanding that IfATE's strategy alone could not deliver all the improvements needed within the technical education system and it was important to reflect this in the document. The strategy should set out clearly where IfATE has direct levers to deliver change and where it will seek to influence and work in coalition with other parties. Obstacles and challenges should be included.
- c. The Committee felt that the strategy document would benefit with a definition of inclusion and that there should be a description of how it would be embedded into IfATE culture and wider.
- d. The Committee was also keen to see granularity around HR escalation processes, the Chair will raise this with the HR Director.

4. Communication Plan

- a. IfATE's External Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Lead was welcomed to the meeting to provide an update on the IfATE communication plan, which still in the formative stages. The Committee was provided with an update of some of the articles that had been published and the ones that had received greater press attention. This included an article on the adoption of software that uses gender-neutral language, and the Social Mobility toolkit that was commissioned in 2021.
- b. The Committee was asked to consider what else could be published and the best ways to promote IfATE's work. Storytelling was suggested as a good option, as it included the voices of people who have experienced working as an apprentice. It was felt that articles about the establishment of the sustainable apprenticeship would gather a lot of interest. The Committee asked whether the messages being sent out were in line with the Government strategy.
- c. A recommendation was made to include the Apprentice Panel in the discussions.

5. External Speaker - ESFA

- a. Matt Foulds was welcomed to the meeting to talk about:
 - i. how D&I is central to the aims of the apprenticeship programme.
 - ii. the ongoing challenges; and
 - iii. drivers of change – what advice did the Committee have.
- b. In response to question iii) the Committee recommended working with the Apprentice Panel and creating an alumnus of members who could be approached to continue championing apprenticeships.

- c. During the discussion about the quality of apprenticeships, it was agreed that there were opportunities to continue ensuring apprenticeships remained fit for purpose, and that the diversity of the workforce could be improved. Patterns were emerging, where there were some groups who achieved less than others which would require further investigation to understand the reasons for this. The Committee was provided with details of research that had been conducted in 2020. The Committee made a request for the summary of the presentation to be shared after the meeting.
- d. The Committee was pleased to hear that there had been an increase in the number of people from diverse backgrounds taking part in apprenticeships, and that there had also been an increase in the number of women taking STEM apprenticeships.
- e. However, there were gaps in achievement rates and there was also a reduction in the number of people who completed their apprenticeship compared to the number of people who started them.
- f. The committee was provided with an update on the Diversity Champion Network, including the work that had been done to develop effective recruitment practices.
- g. A funding policy was being drafted to allow employers to have access to funds to make adjustments and supply additional learning and support for a growing diverse network. New guidance had also been published,
- h. The Committee was informed of a scheme that was being set up to help with apprenticeship experience. This would be in the form of a database where potential applicants could search for an apprenticeship. It would also have guidance for applicants and would have different networks for members to discuss their experiences. Storytelling was identified as a valuable tool to use.
- i. There was mutual agreement that sharing data would be of great benefit and wanted to work together to review the number of apprentices who complete their training, those who stay with their employer and also find out what progress they make following completion.

- j. The Committee also highlighted the benefits of using a shared platform to share work plans and agendas. This was seen as another operational tool that would help IfATE and ESFA collaborate.

6. Any Other Business

- a. The date of the next meeting is 7 September 2022.

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