



Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

One hundred and eighth meeting of the Board of Directors

Confirmed minutes of the meeting on 21 June 2018, 13.45-15.30

Open business

Present

Members: Mr Christopher Banks (Chair) Mr Stephen Criddle
Dr Vanessa Davies Mr Amatey Doku
Ms Linda Duncan Ms Sara Drake
Professor Maria Hinfelaar Mr Oliver Johnson
Professor Craig Mahoney Professor Denise McAlister
Professor Andrew Wathey Mr Craig Watkins
Professor Philip Winn

Apologies

Members: Professor Joy Carter Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty
Mr Philip Wilson

In attendance

Officers: Mr Douglas Blackstock (CEO)
Miss Lavinia Blackett
Mrs Natalie Haines
Mr Ian Kimber
Mr Will Naylor
Ms Rowena Pelik
Mrs Liz Rosser

Company members' representatives:

Mr Alex Bols (GuildHE)
Mr William Hammonds (UUK)

Observers: Mr Scott Court (OfS)
Mr Ben Elger (OIA)
Mr Alex Proudfoot (IHE)
Dr Arti Saraswat (AoC)
Mr Gareth Lindop (NUS)

Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed members, company member representatives and observers to the meeting, and noted apologies.

Quorum and interests

Quorum and interests (item 2)

2. The meeting was declared quorate.

Minutes from the meeting held on 14 March 2018 (item 12, BD-2018-34)

3. The minutes of the open business of the meeting held on 14 March 2018 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting, subject to the addition of Professor Joy Carter to the attendance list.
4. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Discussion items

Chief Executive's report (item 14, BD-2018-35)

5. The Board noted the Chief Executive's report on recent policy developments. The Chief Executive highlighted the following:
 - Following recent meetings between the Chief Executives of QAA and the Office for Students (OfS), the two organisations were in the process of finalising a mutually acceptable designation agreement.
 - In April 2018, the Welsh government launched a technical consultation on its proposed reforms to the post-compulsory education and training sector. QAA had sought the views of its Wales Strategic Advisory Committee and was engaging with other stakeholders on these proposals, before submitting a formal response to the consultation by the deadline in July 2018.
 - The 2018 European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Ministerial Conference took place in Paris in May, attended by representatives from 78 countries. QAA was invited to join two delegations from the UK: the Chief Executive as part of the UK delegation led by Sam Gyimah MP, Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation; and Rowena Pelik, Director of Nations & International, as part of the UK Scotland delegation led by Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science.
 - The revised Expectations, Core and Common Practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education were published in March 2018. The next stage of work was now underway to develop the underpinning Advice and Guidance. As part of this, QAA held ten consultation events around the UK during April and May 2018, attended by over 550 people. The drafts would be developed over the summer and early autumn for discussion by the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSC) in October 2018, prior to the formal launch of the fully revised Quality Code in late November 2018.

Report on 2018 Annual conference (item 15, BD-2018-36)

6. The Board received a paper reporting on the outcomes of the 2018 QAA Annual Conference - "The UK Quality Summit: Delivering Impact through Innovation" - which was held on 24-25 April at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Cardiff.
7. Mrs Rosser confirmed that 338 delegates attended the conference and provided an overview of the feedback received. The Board **noted** the positive feedback from the conference and agreed to recommend that the conference remain part of the QAA calendar for 2018-19.
8. Members gave positive feedback on the organisation and usefulness of the conference, although organisers were asked to consider slight changes to the format to avoid the "graveyard" effect of the final session as many people left early.

Outline proposal for a UK Centre for Academic Integrity (item 16, BD-2018- 37)

9. Mr Naylor presented a paper on the outline proposal for the creation of a UK Centre for Academic Integrity within QAA. The overarching aim of the Centre would be to provide a coordinated and collaborative approach to dealing with the challenges faced by the sector in relation to maintaining academic integrity. Mr Kimber provided a verbal report on a round table meeting hosted by QAA at which key stakeholders had discussed issues relating to academic integrity and fraud.
10. The Board considered the risks and opportunities associated with establishing the Centre, the potential benefits to students and its jurisdiction and scope. The Board emphasised the need to ensure that all nations were equally engaged in discussions regarding the development of the Centre at an early stage.
11. Following consideration, the Board and observers present supported the development of the Centre. The Board **agreed** that officers should develop a full business case for the Centre for consideration at a future meeting, and continue to open discussions with members, funders, subscribers and other stakeholders about its creation.

Assuring UK Trans National Education (TNE) (item 17, BD-2018-38)

12. Ms Pelik introduced a paper on assuring UK TNE. She reported that QAA had undertaken country-based overseas audits (now TNE review) to supplement domestic review processes. However, the UK wide contract for TNE review and international strategic engagement and activity in this area would cease at the end of 2017-18 year. Ms Pelik informed the Board that this would impact on the planned TNE review in Malaysia which would no longer be funded as a result of these changes. The Board was advised that QAA was working closely with the sector to consider options about the ways to assure UK TNE in light of the changes.
13. In his capacity as the Chair of the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment (UKSCQA), Professor Wathey reported that the UKSCQA had been, and would continue to be, involved in this area. Mr Court assured the Board that TNE was covered within the regulatory framework for England and stated that he would be happy to be involved in further discussions.
14. The Board **noted** the paper and agreed that a collaborative approach to assuring the quality of UK TNE should be developed with the sector.

Appointments to the Board and Board Committees (item 18, BD-2018-39)

15. Following an introduction from Mrs Haines, the Board **approved** the following appointments to the Board on the recommendation of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee (NRC):
 - a. To **appoint** Mr Matt Adie, subject to successful references, as independent student member pursuant to Article 46 (iv) for a one-year term from 21 June 2018 (to 21 June 2019). Mr Adie would succeed Mr Robert Cashman, and would, by virtue of his appointment to the Board, also assume the role of co-chair of QAA's Student Advisory Committee (SAC). Mr Adie studied business studies and computing science with professional education at the University of Stirling and was the Vice President Education of the Students' Union. He was an OfS subject panellist and a Student Reviewer and Student theme lead for QAA Scotland
 - b. To **re-appoint** Mr Amatey Doku pursuant to Article 46 (v) in the membership category 'nominated by the NUS' for a second and final 1-year term from 1 July 2018 (to 1 July 2019).
16. In addition, the Board **noted** the following re-appointments and retirements to the Board:
 - a. The re-appointment, jointly by the representative bodies (Universities Scotland, UUK, Universities Wales and GuildHE) pursuant to Article 46 (i), of Professor Andrew Wathey for a second and final three-year term (to 1 September 2021)
 - b. The continued appointment of Mr Philip Wilson as independent member Alternative Provider pursuant to Article 46 (vii) for a further 2-year term until 21 June 2020
 - c. The end of term of Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty (with effect from 10 September 2018) appointed jointly by the Funding Bodies.
17. The Board **approved** the following committee appointments:
 - a. to Advisory Committee for Degree Awarding Powers (ACDAP)
 - Dr Vanessa Davies from 21 June 2018 to 21 June 2021
 - Mr Luke Myer as the student representative from 21 June 2018 to 21 June 2019. Mr Luke Myer is Vice President Academic Representation for Edge Hill Students' Union, Lancashire.
 - b. Ms Sara Drake to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) from 21 June 2018 to 21 June 2021
 - c. Mr Stephen Criddle to the Nomination and Remuneration Committee (NRC) from 21 June 2018 to 21 June 2021
 - d. Ms Gemma Jones to QAA Scotland - Strategic Advisory Committee (QAAS) from 21 June 2018 to 21 June 2019
 - e. To QAA Wales - Strategic Advisory Committee (QAAW)
 - Ms Gwyneth Sweatman (incoming president of NUS Wales) to the QAAW Committee from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019
 - Mr Iestyn Davies (Chief Executive Colegau Cymru/College Wales) to the QAAW Committee from 21 July 2018 to 21 July 2021.

Reporting items

GDPR update (item 20, BD-2018-41)

18. Miss Blackett provided the Board with an update on the steps taken to ensure compliance with the statutory requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
19. A comprehensive GDPR readiness programme had been implemented and was being monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) on behalf of the Board. Since the readiness report to the Board in March, a number of key developments had taken place including the roll out of GDPR training to all staff, the revision of all data protection policies and procedures to ensure compliance; a cross-Agency audit of personal data had been undertaken and consents revalidated in accordance with GDPR requirements.
20. To support the Board's responsibility for developing a culture of commitment to transparency that informs all Agency activity, QAA had adopted and rolled out a 'Privacy by Design' approach, which required the impact on individuals' rights to be considered before the implementation of any new activity involving personal data processing.
21. Miss Blackett confirmed the next steps and the systems introduced to further support and monitor QAA's compliance capacity including an internal audit of GDPR scheduled for 2018-19. The Board **noted** the ARC's assessment that the organisation is implementing adequate measures to ensure compliance with the revised law.

Term 2 reporting - Finance Report (item 20a, BD-2018-41)

22. Mrs Rosser introduced the Term 2 Finance Report. The report set out the financial position to 31 March 2018 and the forecast position to 31 July 2018.
23. The Board noted the additional income which had driven the extra surplus, and despite some unforeseen one-off costs, measures implemented during term 2 had ensured the full year forecast operating surplus was now £234k, £38k higher than budgeted, and an improvement on term 1 forecast of £132k.
24. The year to date operating surplus as at 31 March was £84k compared to term 1 forecast surplus of 126k, a shortfall of £42k. This shortfall was not considered permanent but a result of timing differences in activity between the forecast and actual.
25. Further details were provided by Mrs Rosser highlighting an overview of notable changes and Chair's action taken on behalf of the Board in relation to revised contracts between QAA and the OfS.
26. The Board:
 - a) **noted** the report on QAA's current financial position and the key reasons behind any significant variances
 - b) **noted** the forecast position to 31 July 2018
 - c) **noted** the treasury update and **approved** the addition of Mrs Stephanie Stephenson, Head of Marketing and Production to the bank mandate, in order to maintain an adequate working number of authorised signatories

- d) **ratified** the action taken by the Chair authorising the Chief Executive to execute new contracts with the OfS.

Term 2 reporting – Monitoring and performance report (item 20b, BD-2018-42)

27. Mrs Rosser provided the Board with the term 2 Monitoring and Performance report. Following a review by Executive, 11 out of the 14 priorities were recorded as on track or achieved, and three reported as off track.
28. The Board **noted** the report on QAA's term 2 Monitoring and Performance.

“Public Good and a Prosperous Wales - the next steps” a consultation by the Welsh Government (item 21, BD-2018-43)

29. Ms Pelik presented a paper summarising the headline messages from the 157 page/100 question technical consultation by the Welsh Government on their proposed reforms to the Post-Compulsory Education and Training Sector which had been launched in April 2018. The consultation had confirmed the intention to establish a Tertiary Education and Research Commission for Wales.
30. Ms Pelik reported that responding to the consultation gave QAA the opportunity to provide the Welsh Government with its expert views on the proposals and contribute to the development of proposals that meet the needs of higher education in Wales within a reformed PCET system.
31. As part of formulating a response, the QAA Wales Committee reviewed the consultation questions and Professor Hinfelaar provided the Board with a verbal summary on topics covered at their recent meeting. A draft response would be circulated to Board members before submission.

Summary report from Board committee meetings (item 22, BD-2018-44)

32. The Board received and **noted** the summary report of Board Committee meetings held since March 2018.

Any other business

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting.

This document is available in English and Welsh.

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