



**BOARD MEETING**  
Held Monday 14 December 2020 at 15.45  
Via remote participation

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the Board MEETING  
held on Monday 14 December 2020 at 15.45**

<p><b>Members present:</b> Tiffany Hall Steve Davies Anna Douglas Rachel Jackson Zarine Kharias Gillian Lancaster Chris Payne Mark Smith Joanna Smith Kevin Walsh Nick Wilcock</p> <p><b>In attendance</b> Tina Götschi Sophie Runcorn Geoff Stevenson Olwen Sisupalan Joy Watkins Jacky Gearey</p>	<p>Chair and External Member External Member External Member External Member External Member External Member External Member CEO Staff governor External Member External Member</p> <p>Principal Projects Director and Chief of Staff Regional Apprenticeship Manager Director of External Relations Director of Finance and Operations Clerk</p>
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**Quorum 7 Members**

Item	Topic	Action
	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
	Apologies had been received from: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tom Fogden</li> <li>2. Lisa Kattenhorn</li> <li>3. Salman Momen</li> </ol>	
	<b>Declarations of Interest in agenda items</b>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
2.0	The Chair opened the meeting at 15.45 and welcomed the new Director of Finance and Operations and Director of External Relations to their first meeting.  Steve Davies advised that he was reluctantly stepping down from the Board after 5 years due to increased pressure of other commitments. The Chair wished to thank him on behalf of the Board for his invaluable insight on the audit and remuneration committees and said that he would be sorely missed.	
2.1	<b>Minutes of Previous meeting</b>	
	<p><b>Minutes:</b> (i) Meeting 30 September 2020 The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2020 as an accurate record and the Chair to sign the minutes.</p> <p><b>Confidential minutes:</b> (ii) Meeting 30 September 2020 (iii) Meeting 24 November 2020</p> <p>The Board approved the confidential minutes of the meetings held on 30 September and 24 November 2020 as an accurate record and the Chair to sign the minutes.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p>	

	<p>(i) the minutes were an accurate record of the meetings 30 September 2020 to be signed by the Chair</p> <p>(ii) the confidential minutes were an accurate record of the meetings held on 30 September and 24 November 2020 to be signed by the Chair</p>	
2.2	<p><b>Matters Arising not covered by the agenda</b></p> <p><b>Minutes - 30 September 20</b> Item 1.4: the apprenticeship benchmark data to be sent to the Board when received - still open Item 1.9: (i) provide to the Board and the Education committee a plan on teacher training and professional development and the use of resources which marries up with the business plan – still open (ii) provide the Advisory Board actions for the Board Chair for information – still open</p>	
2.3	<p><b>Approval and noting of:</b></p> <p>The Board was advised that the following documents and policies had each been reviewed and recommend to the Board for approval but if there were any questions to address them at the time of approval:</p> <p>(i) <b>Annual Financial Statements 2019-2020</b> – the Board asked how the audit functioned during the pandemic – CEO explained that this had all been done remotely with all documents uploaded and would have only involved one day on site had there not been the restrictions. For reassurance had there been any concerns the auditors would have visited the College. The Board asked for sight of the Treasury Management policy referred to in the Statements and the Clerk said that it would be sent out after the meeting. There also followed a discussion on a Reserves Policy and the uses of reserves. Finally, it was agreed that any adjustments could be made to the Statements as the submission deadline was 31 January 2021, however the Chair asked for Board approval as seen. The Board approved for signature.</p> <p>(ii) <b>Report on Going Concern</b> – the CEO reassured the Board that there was a good cash balance.</p> <p>(iii) <b>Post Audit Management Report 2019– 2020</b> – auditors said that it was a clean audit – Board approved</p> <p>(iv) <b>Regularity Self-Assessment</b> - noted</p> <p>(v) <b>Letter of Representation</b> – Board approved and to be signed</p> <p>(vi) <b>Annual Fraud Assessment Report</b> – Board approved</p> <p>(vii) <b>Audit Committee's Annual Report</b> – Board approved</p> <p>(viii) <b>Annual Risk Management Report</b> - noted</p> <p>(ix) <b>Risk Management Policy</b> – Board approved</p> <p>(x) <b>Annual Health &amp; Safety Report</b> - noted</p> <p>(xi) <b>Health &amp; Safety Policy</b> – Board asked for clarity in the wording regarding overall responsibility for the two sites. CEO said that it was his ultimate responsibility and would ensure that the wording reflected this. Board approved</p> <p>(xii) <b>Subcontracting Policy</b> – Board approve</p> <p>(xiii) <b>Annual Report on the College Seal for 2019-2020</b> – Board approved</p> <p>(xiv) <b>F&amp;R Terms of Reference</b> – Board approved</p> <p><b>Resolved that the following documents were received and approved by the Board:</b></p> <p>(i) <b>Annual Financial Statements 2019-2020</b> (ii) <b>Report on Going Concern</b> (iii) <b>Post Audit Management Report 2019– 2020</b> (iv) <b>Letter of Representation</b> (v) <b>Annual Fraud Assessment Report</b> (vi) <b>Audit Committee's Annual Report</b> (vii) <b>Risk Management Policy</b> (viii) <b>Health &amp; Safety Policy</b> (ix) <b>Subcontracting Policy</b> (x) <b>Annual Report on the College Seal for 2019-2020</b> (xi) <b>F&amp;R Terms of Reference</b></p> <p><b>Resolved that the following were received and noted by the Board</b></p> <p>(i) <b>Regularity Self-Assessment</b> (ii) <b>Annual Risk Management Report</b> (iii) <b>Annual Health &amp; Safety Report</b></p> <p><b>Resolved that the Clerk would send the Treasury Management Policy to all Board members</b></p>	

2.4	<p><b>Chief Executive's Overview</b></p> <p>The CEO asked that the paper be taken as read but highlighted the following:</p> <p><b>Apprenticeships</b> In the Dean's absence the CEO advised that the apprenticeship team continued to deliver the provision remotely since March 2020 to a consistently high standard with between 94-97% apprentice attendance. 47 End Point Assessments (EPAs) have been conducted with high pass rates including a high percentage at distinction level. October was the first fully remote Launchpad, ideally this would have been better face-to-face. A half-day wash-up and reflection session will take place once Launchpad is finished to capture lessons learnt to drive future improvement.</p> <p>Chair asked about the remote learning and CEO said that a mixed delivery model would be better as the feedback received concerned the updated curriculum and fatigue with 6 weeks of remote learning.</p> <p><b>Sixth Form</b> The Principal advised that this year had seen the best enrolment into sixth form with over 90 students being split evenly onto the three pathways. The sixth form team has coped with a huge amount in the first term of the new academic year, including a switch back to remote delivery due to a Covid infection. The attendance figure was currently 92%.</p> <p>The Chair asked for questions: The lower application numbers into next year's sixth form - CEO said he was concerned about these which were down but currently the schools were difficult to get into and additionally students were not keen on virtual evenings. Why the work with the PR company had ceased in October - CEO explained that the company had delivered exceptional value for money, but it was paused due to financial expediency. Ideally going forward the CEO would engage them again on an ongoing contract once the financial forecast has been secured.</p> <p><b>Ofsted Interim visit</b> – the Board wanted to congratulate the CEO and the whole college team for work done during the recent short notice Ofsted Interim visit and the good outcome. CEO thanked the Board but advised them that going forward more work would need to be done on the new Education Inspection Framework and that Ofsted will regulate all inspections of all apprenticeships and degrees.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b> <b>(i) The CEO's Executive Overview Report was received by the Board</b></p>	
2.5	<p><b>College Annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR)</b></p> <p>The CEO referred to the executive summary in the SAR and said that the Education committee had rigorously scrutinised the document and the Board agreed that the final report was far easier to read and the information to assimilate. The Chair asked if there were any further questions. The Board felt that there were some points that were still overly wordy, and the CEO said that he would address these namely regarding the continuous self-improvement before submitting it. The Board also commented that under Leadership and Management no reference had been made to governance and this had to be considered for next year. CEO took note of this. The Chair thanked the Education committee. The Board approved the document.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b> <b>(i) the College Annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR) was received and approved by the Board</b> <b>(ii) CEO to reference governance under Leadership and Management for all future SARs</b></p>	
2.6	<p><b>Safeguarding and Prevent Update</b></p> <p>The Principal briefed the Board highlighting the following:</p> <p><b>Sixth Form Safeguarding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of students being supported by the safeguarding team has increased in recent months due to the nature of the ongoing pandemic and the implications that accompany this.</li> <li>• An appointment has been made to cover the current DSL's maternity leave, which will start at the beginning of January.</li> <li>• There is a new counsellor in the role who is working well with students and prioritising those who most need the support.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An additional member of staff has been trained to DSL level to support the increased workload for the safeguarding team, especially with the current DSL working remotely.</li> </ul> <p><b>Apprentices Safeguarding</b> The CEO covered apprenticeships in the Dean's absence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Far fewer safeguarding concerns arise and when they do occur, the College works in collaboration with the apprentice's employer.</li> <li>There is now a counselling service which has been put into the apprentices' care plan devised by their employer and the College.</li> <li>One new apprentice still logged as a concern during this period with continued monitoring and one-to-one support taking place.</li> <li>Apprenticeship staff and new apprentice cohort attended Prevent training carried out by the regional HE/FE coordinator for London.</li> <li>More refresher training to be done with apprentices over the 3 year period.</li> </ul> <p><b>Prevent</b> There were no concerns raised across the College.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding Policy</b> The safeguarding policy had been updated in line with KCSIE 2020 with an additional section on Covid with the names of relevant members of staff. The Board approved the updated policy but asked that in future this and any other policies be written in sans serif fonts as they are more legible at any size than some serif designs.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) <b>The Safeguarding and Prevent update was received by the Board</b></li> <li>(ii) <b>Safeguarding Policy was approved by the Board</b></li> <li>(iii) <b>Future policies be written in sans serif fonts</b></li> </ul> <p>Tina Götschi left the meeting at 16.35</p>	
2.7	<p><b>Manchester Pilot Update</b></p>	
	<p>The Geoff Stevenson as the Regional Manager (RM) entered the meeting at 16.36 and briefed the Board as follows:</p> <p>There were currently a minimum of 10 apprentices joining for the pilot cohort in February 2021, the number is below the forecast due mainly to Covid-19's impact on employers. The Intention is for delivery to include a significant element of face-to-face teaching, but this is being discussed with employers and various options being explored to ensure efficient delivery of the February cohort across London and Manchester without compromising quality and jeopardising fledgling employer partnerships in the region. Demand for Autumn 2021 was better and includes a number of organisations looking to train apprentices at the London and Manchester sites.</p> <p>The Prince's Trust pilot programmes went well, however the College was not successful in its bid for the Digital Futures Fund,</p> <p>The College is involved in the stage 1 Institute of Technology application process for the Greater Manchester region and 3 other FE Colleges and the Uni. of Salford are involved. If successful, it offers a pathway to capital funding for a longer-term campus in the region. The College will be advised of the stage 1 application in March 2021.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there were any questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What did the RM see as the priorities going forward? The RM said it was the lead lecturer. College is still looking for a full-time person but considering other options, however due to the number of apprentices in the cohort the London resource can be used. The Chair advised caution in the optics of this.</li> <li>2. What resources were required and whether the Board could offer support? RM thanked the Board and said that he was drawing on various pro bono consultants to help especially looking at Autumn 2021.</li> <li>3. What was the feedback from the Prince's Trust? RM confirmed that as yet there had been no feedback albeit it was promised and he would chase. The College had been asked to deliver more courses but not at the scale previously hoped for and these were for the last week in January and first week in February and these would be fully funded.</li> <li>4. Were there any more concerns? RM said that apart from the numbers, the overall break-even point was low and there was a reason to be positive as they had been cautious with the money spent so far.</li> </ol>	

	<p>5. The Chair asked about diversity? RM said that the employers have different approach to this and place values in different places.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the RM for all his help and the link governor who had been working alongside him in support of this.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the Manchester Pilot Update was received by the Board</b></li> </ul> <p>Geoff Stevenson left meeting at 16.52</p>	
2.10	<p><b>Update on Organisational Targets &amp; KPIs 2020/2021</b></p> <p>The table presented showed performance from 1 September to 30 November against the top 10 organisational key performance indicators. Performance was RAG rated and none of the KPIs were deemed to be red with three amber KPIs where performance is slightly behind namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sixth Form application volumes – again impacted by COVID but expect to be able to reach the target or very close to it by the summer.</li> <li>2. Percentage of Sixth Form applicants who are female – in line with previous years at 22% but not making required progress towards target of 35%. A number of girls' schools have upcoming recruitment events. Applications are very fluid and a better update to be provided at the March meeting.</li> <li>3. Apprentice recruitment volumes – numbers are looking low for February intakes in both London and Manchester but there is significantly more activity and interest for the Autumn intakes.</li> </ol> <p>All other KPIs are green, except the number of confirmed Sixth Form offers which cannot be measured yet as the first batch of offer decisions have not yet been made following recent assessment centres. Apprentices' attendance is between 94- 97% and although a small cohort this term it is the most diverse in gender and from low income backgrounds.</p> <p>Board queried whether the apprenticeship recruitment should be red signalling concern given the context of previous discussions. CEO said he would update this accordingly.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) <b>the Update on Organisational Targets &amp; KPIs 2020/2021 was received and noted by the Board</b></li> <li>(ii) <b>Apprenticeship recruitment to be RAG rated red - CEO said he would update this accordingly</b></li> </ol>	
2.11	<p><b>Strategic Level Risk Register</b></p> <p>The organisation's strategic risk register has been revised and the approach adopted now aligns risks to eight strategic objectives and consolidates risks, so they are all at the same strategic level. This change in approach has eliminated those risks linked to specific temporary events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and instead focussed on long-term risks that could be impacted by a range of events. This has reduced the number of risks on the register. The eight strategic objectives are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To achieve Ada's social mission through diversity of learners: 50% female and non-binary, 50% from low income backgrounds and 50% from ethnic minority backgrounds</li> <li>2. To be a centre of excellence for teaching and learning of advanced digital skills</li> <li>3. To be an aspirational alternative to university</li> <li>4. To be a beacon of best practice in employment-focussed provision</li> <li>5. To grow our impact and fulfil our national remit through sustained growth in learner volumes (10,000 lives transformed and 10,000 benefitted by 2030)</li> <li>6. To provide a safe environment for learners and staff that complies with all applicable regulations</li> <li>7. To be a financially stable and sustainable organisation</li> <li>8. To be an employer of choice with a high performing team culture</li> </ol> <p>During 2020/21 the aim is to further improve risk management by defining risk appetite statements for each strategic objective. The CEO asked for feedback from the Board on the effectiveness of these changes and suggestions for further improvements.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Board about the second cyber penetration testing which CEO confirmed went well and he reassured that for alternate years the College will pay to have this done by Deloitte., with the aim to have a higher level of cyber security.</p> <p>The audit committee endorsed this saying it was a much improved document. There were no further questions.</p> <p><b>Resolved that the revised Strategic Level Risk Register was received and noted by the Board</b></p>	
2.12	<p><b>Update on People Management Review</b></p> <p>CEO advised that this paper had been shared with the F&amp;R committee explaining that a review of the College's HR and People Management practices had been conducted over the last eight</p>	

	<p>weeks consisting of a range of internal and external interviews, workshops and analysis of staff survey results and recommendations from previous staff-led working groups. A number of recommendations have been proposed to strengthen recruitment and retention of staff, however, to implement the recommendations additional resources and budget will be required, with a people strategy developed alongside to guide this and future work. The intention is to seek a new part time Director of HR on a fixed term contract instead of permanent. Board was concerned about the fixed term nature and CEO said that this would depend on the funding and college growth and was a more pragmatic approach. However the Board felt that this was more important than the budget as it could have major ramifications and asked if there was a possibility of a job share with another college. Board member said that she would speak offline with CEO.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the DoCP again for her work on this and left the meeting at 17.34.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p>(i) <b>Update on People Management Review was received by the Board</b></p> <p>(ii) <b>AD to speak to CEO re a possible Director of HR job share with another college</b></p>	
2.13	<p><b>Covid-19 Update</b></p> <p>Zarine Kharias left meeting at 17.35 The CEO provided an update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apprentice programme fully remote from March 2020 onwards with attendance consistent and module feedback scores slowly improved.</li> <li>• forced delivery of the 6-week launchpad to new apprentices has been challenging for some and the team recognise that it is not the optimum delivery model for remote learning.</li> <li>• sixth form had to return to fully remote learning (from 60% face-to-face delivery) late November due to a student testing positive. The students returned to the College 9 December following consultation with Public Health England (PHE).</li> <li>• adaptations have been made to Broad Lane e.g windows can now be opened securely in line with our risk assessment and government guidance</li> <li>• staff remain resolutely positive despite a very tough year with there being an increase in medical/health assessments for a variety of reasons.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resolved that the Covid-19 update was received and noted by the Board</b></p>	
2.14	<p><b>Board Self-Evaluation 19/20</b></p> <p>The chair that an action plan would be created and asked that the clerk send out a new self-assessment form for completion</p> <p><b>Resolved that the Clerk to send out a new self-assessment form to all Board members for early completion.</b></p>	
2.15	<p><b>Committee Feedback/minutes</b></p> <p>(i) Education committee minutes of 20 October and 24 November were noted with the Chair providing the highlights referring to item 2.5.</p> <p>(ii) Audit committee minutes of 18 November were noted with the Chair saying comments had already been made in item 2.3.</p> <p>(iii) The Chair of the Finance &amp; Resources committee gave a brief overview of the discussion topics covered under item 2.9 and 2.12.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there were any questions on the above that had not been addressed in the previous agenda items and there were none.</p> <p><b>Resolved that:</b></p> <p>(i) <b>Education committee minutes of 20 October and 24 November were received and noted by the Board</b></p> <p>(ii) <b>Audit committee minutes of 18 November were received and noted by the Board</b></p> <p>(iii) <b>Finance &amp; Resource verbal update was received and noted by the Board</b></p>	
2.16	<p><b>Forward Agenda items</b></p> <p><b>None</b></p>	
2.17	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>Whistleblowing</b></p> <p>Chair referred to the Whistleblowing summary investigation report from the external investigator which confirmed that none of the allegations that had been made were upheld. The Chair thanked</p>	

	<p><b>FEC Recommendations Update:</b></p> <p>1. The Board should support an FEC-led SPA to source a suitable partner for merger from colleges, HE institutions and/or independent training providers which have expertise in the digital skills curriculum. This has been discussed and a response provided to FEC and DfE already.</p> <p>2. The Board should pause the option to move into a Manchester operation during 2020/21 whilst it improves its operating position in London. This has been discussed and a response provided to FEC and DfE. Due to Covid the staffing and resource investment for 20/21 has been scaled back as per the Board Update paper with the expectation that volumes will grow in 21/22.</p> <p>3. The College should develop a comprehensive, fully costed curriculum plan that takes account of both the sixth form and apprenticeship provision. This plan should include clear and measurable KPIs for group sizes, staff utilisation, course hours and curriculum contributions. This work has had to be paused due to the lack of a Director of Finance in post over the past 3 months but will be addressed now. The urgency is reduced to increased sixth form volumes enrolling in Year 12 in September.</p> <p>4. The Board should develop a fully articulated financial plan with key objectives for improving the efficiency of the College's delivery model, reduce financial dependency on philanthropic giving and increase other guaranteed sources of income from business. This should take into account risks and sensitivities for both income and costs. This work has been completed as part of the 10 year business planning process and the 3-year budget forecast.</p> <p>5. The Board should establish a finance committee as part of its Board structure in order that more detailed discussion and scrutiny of the College's finances can be undertaken outside the main board meetings. This recommendation has been actioned.</p> <p>6. The Board should consider strengthening the education skills of its membership and recruit both staff and student governors who can also contribute to the work of the education committee. - Lisa Kattenhorn has been appointed as a Board Member and joined the Education committee. The student governor search process has been paused due to Covid but needs to happen in Q1 2021.</p> <p>There was no other business</p>	
2.18	<p><b>Date of Next meeting:</b></p> <p>1. 13 March 2021 at 15.45</p>	
	<p><b>Close of meeting</b></p>	
	<p>The chair thanked everyone for all their work during such challenging times.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 17.49</p>	
	<p>MINUTES of the meeting held on <b>Monday 14 December 2020</b> were agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair</p> <p>..... on .....</p>	