



AUDIT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting on Tuesday 14 March 2017

Present:	Mr H Hadani	Chair
	Ms N Cuffy	Governor
	Ms M Moore	Governor
In Attendance:	Mr M Sim	Principal
	Mr H Ravat	Vice-Principal Resources
	Mr R Mansfield	Clerk
	Mr M Ashton-Blanksby	ICCA ETS

Ref.		Action
A/17/01	<p>Item 1 – Apologies for Absence: An apology for absence was received from Jim Pain. The meeting was declared quorate. Harnish Hadani welcomed Mark Ashton-Blanksby to the meeting.</p>	
A/17/02	<p>Item 2 – Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items: There were no declarations of interest in agenda items.</p>	
A/17/03	<p>Item 3 – Minutes of Meeting on 1 December 2016 and Matters Arising: The minutes of the meeting on 1 December 2016 were accepted as an accurate record and were duly signed by Harnish Hadani. There were no matters arising.</p>	
A/17/04	<p>Item 4 – Recommendation Tracking: There was nothing further to report on recommendation tracking.</p>	
A/17/05	<p>Item 5 – Internal Audit Reports 2016/2017: Mark Ashton-Blankley presented the internal audit reports for 2016/2017 that had been prepared by ICCA ETS. Before dealing with the detailed content of each audit he presented the headlines of the report: its objectives and scope, the executive summary and the list of audit themes. There had been ten recommendations: one of high priority, two of medium priority and seven of low priority. Links had been made where appropriate with issues highlighted for attention by OfSTED. Within each audit theme the report set out the audit objective, the approach, the risk objective and the control objectives. Each report provided an assessment of the level of assurance and supporting statements.</p>	

High Needs Students

The audit confirmed that the design and application of controls was good. The level of assurance had been rated substantial. OfSTED had however identified that students were not receiving the requisite individual support. The College had addressed this and now needed to obtain confirmatory assurances from the Local Authority. Harnish Hadani requested and received an assurance that ICCA ETS had benchmarked hourly rates.

Study Programmes

Again the audit confirmed that the design and application and compliance of controls was good. The level of assurance had been rated substantial. Robert Mansfield said that the audit presented a more favourable picture than a recent report to the Finance, Staffing & General Purposes Committee which had shown that there were too many large and small programmes. Mark Ashton-Blanksby said that the audit had looked at programme sizes in aggregate only. Harnish Hadani asked which benchmarks ICCA ETS had used. Mark Ashton-Blanksby replied that comparisons had been made with his firm's database for sixth form colleges nationally.

Student Journey (16-18 EFA)

The level of assurance and conclusions were as for the two previous reports. Three recommendations had been made, with particular focus on work experience and progression.

Mock Funding Audit

Mark Ashton-Blanksby stated that with regard to the mock funding audit it had been concluded that the level of assurance was reasonable only. While the assurance as regards the design of controls was good, for application and compliance the assurance had been assessed as adequate. Five recommendations had been made, including one of high priority relating to the gathering of evidence about work experience and work-related activity.

Martin Sim said that, given the recent OfSTED report, the College would be at particular risk of being selected for a funding audit if its Individual Learner Records were found to be inaccurate. Hamid Ravat said that a key point was to ensure that there was evidence of delivery during non-qualification hours. Martin Sim said he had been pleased to find that the College had been prudent on this issue. He believed that the College was at high risk of selection in respect of its claim for 2016/2017. Mark Ashton-Blanksby offered the assistance of ICCA ETS in selecting the sample in advance of the audit as they possessed the relevant software. Martin Sim thanked him for this offer and advised that it should be accepted.

Key Financial Controls

The audit confirmed that the assessment of the design and the application and compliance of controls was good. The

level of assurance had been rated substantial. There was one recommendation of low priority.

Follow-up

The audit confirmed that all previous recommendations, as reported to the Committee, had been actioned.

He concluded by saying that this was a strong report, and that he had expected on a first audit to have made more recommendations. Harnish Hadani thanked ICCA ETS for a comprehensive report. He had found the results of the mock funding audit of especial value.

The meeting received the internal audit reports for 2016/2017.

A/17/06

Item 6 – Risk Register:

Hamid Ravat presented the College risk register. This had been recently reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team in detail. His presentation focused on significant changes and risks with residual scores of 15 or higher. The Committee made requested various changes to wording, scores and RAG ratings. It was agreed that the register should contain explicit reference to a funding audit. Hamid Ravat undertook to have the requested changes incorporated before the risk register was submitted to the Board.

The Committee received the risk register.

HR

A/17/07

Item 7 – Committee's Terms of Reference:

Robert Mansfield presented the Committee's terms of reference for review. He had made minor changes more accurately to reflect its remit. Mark Ashton-Blanksby drew the attention of the meeting to the recent published revision of the Joint Audit Code of Practice (JACOP). This made explicit reference to the requirement for the Committee to give an opinion on the framework of assurance. It was agreed that Robert Mansfield would review the latest version of the JACOP to ensure that the Committee's terms of reference were fully compliant.

Subject to this further check the Committee commended the revised terms of reference to the board for ratification.

RM

A/17/08

Item 8 – Date and Time of Next Meeting:

After discussion it was agreed that the Committee should meet towards the end of the summer term to conduct the business hitherto conducted in September, in order to ease the pressure on senior staff at a very busy period. The date suggested was Monday 26 June 2017 at 5.30 p.m. Robert Mansfield said that he would check this against the College calendar and advise members accordingly.

RM

A/17/09

Item 9 – Any Other Business:

There was no other business. Mark Ashton-Blanksby declined the offer of a private discussion without staff present.