



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LINCOLN COLLEGE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD AT LINCOLN COLLEGE ON TUESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2019 AT 16.00 HOURS

Present:	Nick Cudmore Tim Godson Dean Graham Danielle Lister	Chair Vice Chair
In Attendance:	Sarah Adams Thomas Dannatt Claire Love Richard Lewis Stephen Pringle Sylwester Rzeminski Graham Harrison	Clerk to the Board of Corporation Group Director (Finance and Commercial) Group Financial Controller RSM UK Audit LLP Wylie & Bisset Acting Head of Infrastructure, Facilities and Estates Group Director IT, Information Management and Projects (agenda item 5/19)
Apologies:	Mark Speed	

1/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mark Speed.

2/19 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was reported by the Clerk that notice of the meeting had been given and that a quorum was present. Accordingly, the meeting was declared open. There were no declarations made.

3/19 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Clerk reported that, in accordance with the Standing Orders, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee should be appointed on an annual basis. As previously discussed Nick Cudmore has agreed to remain as Chair until the end of the Calendar Year and Tim Godson as Vice Chair. Following Nick's retirement in December Tim will take the role of Chair. It was agreed to wait until the New Year to appoint a Vice Chair as this may depend on additions to the Committee and any Lay Governor appointments.

The Committee therefore confirmed the appointments of Nick Cudmore and Tim Godson until December 2019 and also the change in January 2020 to Tim Godson as Chair with the role of Vice Chair to be agreed.

The Clerk explained that the Terms of Reference had been amended to reflect changes to the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice published in February 2019. The Committee approved the amendments.

Terms of Reference were approved as amended

4/19 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30 JULY 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2019 were checked for accuracy and matters arising.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed accordingly.

5/19 MATTERS ARISING AND NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

It was noted that the College had been selected for a student funding audit which is currently taking place. Graham Harrison reported that at final sign off there will be no clawback from the audit. Final resampling and review is underway this week. RL explained the deadline of 23 October to have the reports prepared. It is usually end of November/beginning of December when the final reports are released.

RL pointed out the letter received regarding subcontracting compliance and the confirmation deadline of 1 November and ensuring a response. GH confirmed this was in hand.

50/18 Discussion took place around issues raised over late or non-completion of registers. GH reported on the bar graphs being used to clearly illustrate areas of concern and that attendance and accuracy of reports are the key focus of the Gold Group this year. In relation to late registers there are only 23 outstanding in PI currently which is a huge improvement on previous year. It was explained that if the register isn't accurate then you aren't able to close these down and you are unable to distinguish between incomplete or late. It is focused on each week at Gold Group. Sometimes students may change class and this may result in the register not being complete.

There are 108 students withdrawn currently. GH explained the team are looking at the trends but are unable to allocate targets for course or lead areas as this may drive unintended behaviour. There are overall strict retention targets and actions in place. It is not practical to target at course level. The Management accept the point but not the specific implementation. It was explained that breaking down to course level would result in impractical percentages, for example 0.34% as there are more courses than withdrawals and this was discussed in relation to the audit recommendations. It was agreed this was acceptable and understood.

[GH left the meeting]

There were no notifications of urgent business.

6/19 SCHEDULE OF THE AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING REPORT

The Schedule had been updated prior to the meeting. There are 30 items currently with 8 flagged for removal as satisfied that the actions are complete. This will be picked up under the follow-up audit during the year. Some implementation dates have slipped back and the Chair asked if a reason could be added as to why. It was reported that an update discussion had been held with TD and SP to scope the project and agree dates. It was recognised that slippage occurred due to a number of reasons. When setting implementation dates it was noted as important to make them realistic.

RL stated that reasons should be included as part of the Annual Report.

Action: Clerk to include reasons for delayed implementation in Annual Report.

The Chair welcomed the updated report which is proving helpful to the Committee. SP stated that as part of audits they ensure the management responses are agreed by all and also an achievable implementation date. This was welcomed.

Approved: items can be removed that are flagged as green.

7/19 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS

The Chair reported these were the remaining reports for last academic year to get up to date with the schedule. The reports were taken as read.

a) Apprenticeship Strategy

Overall substantial assurance received. Work is still ongoing to develop certain areas. The College has met targets for 18/19 and on track for 19/20. Four recommendations and 11 areas of good practice were noted. A positive report overall.

b) HE Audit Compliance of OfS

Overall strong assurance received. 1 medium recommendation received with 14 areas of good practice. OfS are running some workshops which are being attended next week on compliance and responsibilities for the accounting officer.

Action: TD to feed back to next meeting

c) Student Retention

Overall strong assurance received. 13 areas of good practice and no recommendations.

d) Maximising Student Recruitment, Retention and Success

A follow up meeting and phone call had been carried out in relation to this review to ensure accuracy of the final report. Focus on 42 day rule. Finalising report had been delayed. This was the recommendation to break down figures to course level as similar reviews have been carried out at other colleges. The recommendation was accepted and changes made to reporting procedures for 2019/20. Audit were comfortable that this has been addressed and has been monitored since the start of the academic year. Have not audited this work again and will be followed up. RL stated this was important. SP stated he would have expected to see the reports available and in place for 2018/19. Assurance was substantial following testing of responses. RL stated this is highlighted as an ILR matter and therefore needs to be responded to clearly and included as strong and robust in the Annual Report. It was noted that this could be revisited. CL explained KW had been on long term sickness and there had been a change over to the marketing team. CL stated she had seen the reports.

Action: There is a requirement to receive assurance that this has been put in place and is working. SP stated would follow up on all.

e) Internal Audit Annual Report 2019/20

The report was discussed. It was noted that some figures did not add up correctly. The figures will be updated and the report reissued.

Action: report to be updated and reissued.

8/19 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2019/20

The plan will come to the December meeting. ELT are looking at the plan but there are changes to be taken into account. An example was given of catering being brought back in-house which has involved a lot of transactional work. This may be included to see how well the transition process has taken place. Also to include Board Assurance Framework and Capital Programme. A Project is being carried out on developing a cost of delivery model which will conclude in February hopefully down to course level. This will need testing out. SP reported on looking at catering at other organisations so there is benchmarking to use. RL reported on procurement and connected party transactions that may also be a possible topic for inclusion.

Action: final plan for approval to next meeting.

9/19 AUDIT REPORT SUBCONTRACTING CONTROLS

RL gave an overview of the report and the tight deadlines. He explained this had not been carried out within his team. It was explained there are some follow ups required. TD explained there were some factual inaccuracies and the report will be updated and reissued.

Action: updated report to be issued as soon as available.

10/19 REGULARITY SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a key requirement of external audit and gives an oversight of college responses. Management need to look at the evidence and assure themselves when signing they can answer those questions. External audit is about to start and will report back in December. It was noted this was an internal document that is provided to the Auditors as a starting point and areas of focus for audit.

DG asked about the whistleblowing policy. When does someone decide if a complaint is just that or should be considered as whistleblowing and when would this be ELT or Board? TD stated if a person invokes this then there would be a senior review of whether this would be routed as a complaint, with a preference that if there is any possibility that this is whistleblowing it should go through that procedure. RL agreed this was the correct course of action.

11/19 BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

It was noted that this had been on the agenda on a number of occasions. Discussions have been held with internal and external auditors and a third party. It was explained there is a need to scope what is actually required from the framework. There are a number of different versions that can be used including against each line on the risk register or using a number of different areas of input. TD asked if further consideration can be given to what is required and how it can be resourced. There are a number of assurances received and these need to be captured and where there are gaps these are identified. RL stated a number of assurances are received and he is happy to support in any way required.

Action: TD to follow up and put a proposal together.

12/19 RISK MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The group had met during three times during the year. There had been good attendance and new life in the meeting. TD explained the group are looking at how they can mitigate the risks and bring proposals to how this can be done.

An example was given of CCTV which hasn't worked effectively for some time. Proposals are now coming through for ELT to consider including telephone system, CCTV, etc.

Risk Management Group guidance is being produced.

DG asked if there was a way of producing a summary and metric and was there a possibility of including distance travelled of the risks identified. It was agreed this was a positive step to take. Discussion took place on analysis of 'red' risks and what had been moved to amber or removed.

Action: TD to follow up on this for final report in December.

13/19 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

TD explained a number of reviews had been carried out as part of the financial deal put in place and the External Fire Safety Report had been included for information.

The compliance audit undertaken had resulted in an improvement from 53% to 74% compliance. A third audit is to be carried out and some objectives set for the coming year. A three year plan is being put into place to ensure all areas are followed up.

TD explained that the ELT had undertaken IOSH training. TD thanked Kev Brereton for his work during the year in relation to the audits and reviews undertaken.

Action: next meeting KPIs and system of reporting to be brought.

DG asked if GJC Risk Management had produced a detailed report and this was confirmed.

14/19 GDPR ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

The Clerk explained the number of breaches since GDPR came in and the themes occurring, including in relation to emails. The use of the ProSuite systems to avoid sharing personal emails was outlined. It was explained the Working Group continue to meet monthly. The main task to be completed this term is the audit spreadsheet.

It was explained that only one breach had required reporting to the ICO and the feedback received on actions taken had been positive.

It is recommended that update training is carried out at least biennially and a new package has been sourced with two different levels of training for management and all staff. This is about to be rolled out with a deadline for completion of Easter to fit with the biennial requirement.

The Committee noted the report.

15/19 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to consider.

16/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12 December 2019 at 13.00 hours.

This will be a joint meeting with the Finance Committee to review the annual accounts.

The meeting closed at 17.22 hours.

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Chair

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Date