AAG

## Minutes of Meeting

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| **Date** | **02/11/2023** |
| **Time** | **10:00am-12:00pm** |
| **Location** | **MS Teams Call** |
| **Present** | Ruth Jennings (Chair), George Brown (Vice-Chair) – SQA Accreditation, Alison Eales – QAA, Catherine Ferry – Scottish Government, Diane Mitchell – West Lothian College, Hayley McDonald – ACS Clothing, Matthew Barr – Glasgow University, Sheila Dunn - SCQF, Stuart McKenna – STF, Tommy Breslin – STUC, Nicola Crawford – Education Scotland, Terry Dillon – SDS  |

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|  | Action |
| **1.** | **Apologies & Guests** |  |
|  | Apologies;Bethany Welsh – Balfour Beatty, John Cairns – Balfour Beatty, Nicola Conner – SDS Guests;Derek Farrell – Babington, Laura McEwan – SDS, Shellie Montgomery – SDS, Gordon Wishart - SDS |  |
| **2.** | **Welcome & Previous Minutes** |  |
|  | RJ welcomed all to the meeting. RJ informed the group that Gaynor has left BT and will no longer be present on AAG – thanks were recorded from all members on her behalf. **Kate Mooney from BT to be invited to join AAG moving forward.** AAG updates at SAAB meeting were discussed. Awaiting new date for Group Board meeting and Apprenticeship engagement group. New date for SAAB Employer Equality was shared 08/12 2:00-16:00.**AAG volunteer to be found to support SAAB Employer Equality 8/12**The actions from the previous meeting were updated on. | **NC****NC** |
| **3.** | **Development Manager Update**  |  |
|  | Shellie Montgomery (ShM) attended the meeting to deliver the Development Manager Update.**Aquaculture*** SM raised concerns over delays in timescale for delivery between Stage Gate 3 and now. Queried if it was likely this would be a common occurrence across all developments.
* GB explained reasons for delay, with part of issue being running 2 quals in same sector. Highlighted that there is a risk this could happen again.
* TD highlighted that this risk will hopefully be mitigated with the implementation of the NOS strategy and earlier engagement with stakeholders as a result of the continuous improvement work.
* SM queried if it would be likely that some employers would choose to do the SVQ instead of new apprenticeship. GB advised that this is likely as the sector makes use of the SVQs for employees who are not undertaking an MA

**Engineering*** SM raised concerns over the launch date, highlighting that his centres may require more time. TD updated on conversations ongoing around this regarding proposed dates and reaching an agreement to suit all parties, highlighted that it’s crucial to incorporate all views to deliver an effective timeline so not to disadvantage anyone.

**TD to pick up with SM and DM to arrange a discussion and agree best way for all parties to move forward.** * DM highlighted lessons learned from this development when assessing off the job elements. Highlighted disparity between on and off the job learning (L5 & 7), leaving a gap that needs to be filled. Expressed the need to align this better with developments moving forward – and that AAG as a group should be more aware of this when taking decisions.

**Construction*** SM queried why Glasgow college are withdrawing from offering plastering provision.

 **ShM to ask LB about this and update SM.** **Land-use** * SM queried why SQA AB have still to submit a business case for this development. GB explained that it’s a ‘2-step’ process when deciding on engagement. First of all they submit something that decides wether to engage or not, and the business case comes after. GB expressed that a lot goes into both of these.
* TD expressed that this is a challenge we’re in the process of mitigating. Updated on joint plans between SDS and SQA, which will be piloting in Construction. Expressed that moving forward there should be less of an issue due to this.

**Transport – Road & Rail*** SM queried what job roles are covered and if it covers passenger transport. ShM explained that it covers large goods vehicles, vans, rigid and artics, and doesn’t cover passenger transport.
* TD updated on conversations with bus driving apprenticeships group – The Chair of that group said apprenticeships may not be best for industry going forward but conversations remain in place.
* ShM expressed that ASLEF have been involved in all stages, providing really good engagement.
* SM queried what the Rail apprenticeship covered, ShM explained that it solely covers train drivers. Currently a single employer apprenticeship (ScotRail) – but engaging with other groups for employers who may pick it up in the future.
* GB queried what Awarding Body was confirmed for Rail, SM confirmed that it is EAL.

**Hospitality** * RJ thanked AAG members for pushing out the survey.

DM queried how SDS identify who surveys goes to, asked if there was a list or if we rely on people already involved in the process. ShM and TD explained that we have providers involved in our PAGs, who are our first point of contact who utilise their network. We also promote through the TEG and speak to NTP colleagues. TD expressed that if there’s something from DM and SM’s end where we can be provided with a list of contacts to share surveys with, then that would be useful. DM expressed concern that some stakeholders are missing these and is happy to pick up with TD. **TD to get a list from STF/Colleges Scotland to share all employee or employer surveys with.** SM noted he has not had notification of the plumbing survey. **TD to forward this on.** TB asked if all AAG members can be added to survey lists moving forward so they can help promote and push them out. **All AAG Members to be included in comms for upcoming surveys.**  | **TD****ShM****TD, SM, DM****TD****SDS** |
| **4.** | **Accounting Development Provider Discussion**  |  |
|  | RJ briefly introduced the topic and Derek Farrell (DF) from Babington who was attending today as a guest to help with discussion on this.LB clarified that SDS want to continue with development. DF raised concerns with proposal. Understands the reasons for moving to competency-based qualification, however expressed that accountancy is a totally different case. From speaking to his employers, it is clear that a professional qualification is needed. Expressed that industry have had the current framework for 10 years which has been highly successful, with nearly 80 learners currently in training, 40 new starts planned for next year, and an excellent pass rate (92%). Expressed concern that planned changes will take this highly successful model away. DF spoke on the proposed hybrid model. Explained that this transition would come with severe cost implications, providers would need to change their staff structure completely, would have to recruit an assessor who come in at high salaries where they can’t compete. Expressed caution over proposed solution as he’s not seen it, and explained there will still be funding implications. Also expressed that funding in England is far better than in Scotland. Highlighted the need for a fit for purpose MA that is cost effective. RJ sympathised with DF’s concerns. She highlighted the Principles of an Apprenticeship, and how important it is that all apprenticeships align with this - the apprenticeship offer needs to be competency-based. Asked how AAG can support the transition and explained that this wasn't an easy decision. DF expressed that given the choice, he’d assume all employers would choose the professional qual. Re-iterated that providers are competing for assessors in a very small market with high salaries, and highlighted the biggest issue would be meeting salary demands. He expressed that he thinks this will end up in industry losing apprentices over time. DM sympathised with DF’s concerns. Gave DF assurance that accountancy is an anomaly, and this decision wasn’t taken lightly. Expressed that she knows about how changes can shake up providers. Queried who is currently delivering the professional award, DF explained they come from an accountancy background or have been through the AAT themselves. Need high level people who can also teach and assess. Highlighted that they need staff in place before they can even apply to deliver the qualification. DF spoke on the 50% exemption model. Gut feeling that competency based L8 won't give 50% exemption (maybe only 20%). This needs further clarity, also need to understand what alignment will look like. GB noted that there is a similar development where more candidates are doing the qualification out with the apprenticeship rather than within it. LM responded to DF regarding alignment piece, expressed that we can't determine this until we have Work Situations defined from TEG. Explained that conversations with AAT so far have been positive, and they're doing everything possible to make sure they are aligned. SDS would make any necessary changes to Work Situations to make sure they match and then take them back to the TEG for approval. Explained she went to NTP following the last conversation – wanting professional qualificationss embedded as a mandatory enhancement – and they have agreed to this in principle. Have no idea how this will be costed until final apprenticeship is available. DF expressed there are still a lot of unknowns. However, appreciates the hard work being put in – highlighted the need to remain aware of the market. SM queried the hybrid model - CBQ that covers 50% of professional quals plus 2 exams at the end, would there be any interest from employers in this? DF explained he thinks there will be interest in it. Questions will arise about duration and when the learner moves to L7 or 8. If there is a quicker route available then employers will maybe choose it. SM expressed all apprenticeships must have a work based qualification within it as per SG policy. Highlighted it would be useful to keep engaged with DF on what would make things easier as we move along the process.DF expressed that timescales are very important, there will likely there will be a dual running period for an extended period of time with the previous provision. RJ highlighted understanding risks and planning/communication with employers will be important to ensure a smooth transition and maintain quality. TD expressed that SDS are aware of the challenge this presents. Stuck between a rock and a hard place, for us to have an apprenticeship in this space it must meet the principles of an apprenticeship. Also expressed this is not an unusual format for us to have (Project Management also has mandatory professional qualifications). About us working through this - coming to best overall decision without disadvantaging any party. RJ thanked DF for attending. SM highlighted the poll issued in between meetings, that came back with 100% agreement for the approach we’ve taken.   |  |
| **5.** | **AOB** |  |
|  | **Lapsing Period*** DM requested if we could invite NTP to a future meeting to discuss ongoing concerns with the Lapsing Period. SM agreed with this, noted that on MAG someone from NTP was a permanent member of the group. Queried if we could invite them as an observer or even a member.
* TD happy to speak to NTP around this – highlighted a decision to be made before Christmas on contracting for MAs.

**TD to speak to NTP around attending AAG in some capacity to discuss the Lapsing Period.** * TD expressed we want to get to position in future where 3 months is practical for all parties. Highlighted Continuous Improvement activity in place which is already supporting this. Also expressed that variance between developments should be recognised. About working collaboratively together to get apprenticeships delivered in a timely fashion.
* SM raised concern over funding for Digital Technology apprenticeship, half what it used to be. Also, way they are being paid is changed, went from milestone basis to quarterly. Expressed there are other influencing factors that NTP are aware of and if they were at the meetings, it would be useful. DM supported this point.

**Digital Marketing Update** * Moved to next month in NC’s absence.

**SLWG Self Developed Apprenticeships update** * RJ updated that a small group met earlier this week, unfortunately CF and AB not able to make it, but will pick up with them soon. As a group they discussed some principles which will be circulated to main group after it's been checked by CF/AB. Expressed that we currently have 2 different submission styles – not concerned over how these are packaged, but must ensure quality, governance, robustness is the same. Another meeting planned for 7th November, to agree next steps and start communication process. Also want to connect with SAAB SFG.
* TD noted between meeting on Monday and today, he’s received notification that there is a Heat Pump apprenticeship in private development. Important to have visibility of this to be able to support at various stages. Also expressed this is already being explored within the new Plumbing apprenticeship – similar situation to kitchen fitter apprenticeship.
* AB queried if an apprenticeship is privately funded and meets the principles – whether the final format is expected to look the same as the new TEG developed apprenticeships. RJ explained that currently this is not the case, and we’re looking to iron out these kinds of questions via the group

RJ thanked all and closed the meeting. | **TD** |

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| **Outstanding Actions from Previous Meetings** |
| **Action** | **Owner** |
| AAG Members to attend TEGs in an observatory role.  | MG |
| Report back to AAG on uptake in OPS Framework in **May 2023.**  | GW |
| Continuous Improvement Activity Update **October 2023** | TD |
| MA Digital Marketing update **November 2023**  | NCo |

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| **Apprenticeships Approved in Principle (Stage Gate 3)** |
| **Name of Apprenticeship**  | **Date Approved**  |
| Aquaculture SCQF Levels 5 and 7 | 06/10/2022 |