

QUALITY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: 29th MARCH 2023

MINUTES

PRESENT

Anthony Smith (Chair), Simon Horne, Mark Isherwood, Nicole Morgan

IN ATTENDANCE

Pablo Lloyd (Interim CEO), Kurt Hintz (Executive Principal), David Dangana (Director of Quality and Compliance), Jackie Chapman (CCCT Managing Director), Colleen Marshall (Vice Principal, CIC), Graham Drummond (Director of Governance), Graham Cooper (Clerk)

For item 3: Toreanna Sumner (Project Lead, Mayoral Skills Academies), Anthony Griffin (Head of School for Construction), Carlo Liu (Head of Digital Skills Academy), Sharon Wallace (Head of Creative Skills Academy), Vince Kelly (Head of Hospitality Skills Academy)

APOLOGIES

Amelia Sussman, Nana Brew, Asfa Sohail, Susan Benhene (Student Member)
Chanel Crooks (Student Member), Angela Herbert

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26TH JANUARY 2023

Action

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

The committee noted that:

With respect to item 3, an update on the quality of subcontracting provision will be included in the Group Quality report to future meetings.

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All other matters arising are covered in the agenda for this meeting.

3. SKILLS ACADEMIES UPDATE

The committee received reports on each of the Group's four Mayoral Skills Academies: Green Skills, Digital, Creative (Film and TV), and Hospitality.

The committee noted the aim of the Mayoral Academies programme, being to support Londoners into good work in the green economy, creative industries, digital, health and hospitality sectors. Each hub brings together employers, education and training providers and sector bodies to work together to develop clear pathways into employment and ensure a coordinated offer of training, work experience and advice and guidance for Londoners. The support offered by each Academy Hub focuses particularly on engaging and supporting Londoners who are underrepresented in these key sectors, or those that have been disproportionately affected by the Pandemic, to gain employment. The Academy Hubs also provide support and tools to employers in the sectors to help them address workforce diversity. The CCCG hubs therefore work hard to engage and collaborate with community groups, the London boroughs and industry partners.

3.1 GREEN SKILLS ACADEMY REPORT

Tony Griffin, Head of School for Construction, presented the Green Skills Academy report and the following was noted:

- The CCCG hub is one of five GLA Green Skills Academy Hubs, each of which has its own niche. The CCCG hub is targeted at the construction industry, with a particular focus on new technologies relating to PV, solar thermal, electrical vehicle chargepoints and air source heat pumps.
- Funding of £351k from the Skills Development Fund has been spent on equipment to support this training, installed into the Academy Hub at Tottenham, although delays in sourcing and bringing this new technology into the country has meant that this has been the slowest of the CCCG Academy Hubs to get up and running.

- Further funding of £161k has been made available to upskill existing staff to deliver the specialist skills training, although there are challenges in attracting new staff. The Group has a Construction Industry into Teaching initiative, but salary levels are an issue. Teaching salaries are only broadly equivalent to the current earning levels in industry. Various strategies have been adopted, including a Master Technician Programme, to bring in experts to deliver half-day sessions, but it is likely that pay conditions will lead to upward pressure on salaries and that special pay rates will need to be agreed for the hub's teaching roles. Training of existing staff is also challenging, given that they have a full teaching timetable, although all remaining 23 staff are now in scope for training to be delivered April to July 2023.
- Other key challenges include job outcomes (target 30%). Work is underway with the ESF team and MIS team in relation to data capture, especially learner progression.
- Ways in which the committee and governors can help include sharing information about their networks, as well as visiting the hub in order to view progress. The Chair expressed thanks for the invitation, which he confirmed he would take up.
- Mark Isherwood (Head of Service Camden Adult Education at London Borough of Camden) advised that the borough, in relation to its role as a provider of social housing, is a significant purchaser of training of the type delivered by the Academy Hub. There is dissatisfaction that much of the borough's current training is delivered solely online, which does not fit well with the practical hands-on nature of the work activity to which it relates. In contrast to this, the Academy Hub is able to deliver blended learning, and all practical training is delivered in-person. It was agreed that the opportunity to work with Camden will be followed up through appropriate introductions and that other opportunities to link with governor networks will be explored (as also discussed later in the meeting).

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3.2 DIGITAL SKILLS ACADEMY REPORT

Carlo Liu, Head of Digital Skills Academy, presented the Digital Skills Academy report and the following was noted:

- Key highlights of activity over the past 12 months include:
 - establishing an Employer Advisory Board – for which the hub has been fortunate to attract major players including Google, as well as SMEs, charities and community organisations.
 - working with some leading-edge firms, such as MKAI on emerging technologies such as AI, along with data science programmes.
 - new course offerings that the team are particularly proud of, including UX (user experience), Digital Marketing, Cyber Security and Coding.
 - developing new programmes to widen access for all, e.g:
 - Digital Courses for Neurodiverse (an example of the team's collaboration with Leading Inclusive Futures through Technology (LIFT), a three-year programme across Camden, Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets that aims to help residents into good local jobs in the knowledge economy including tech, digital, sciences, and creative production, and to support businesses and start-ups in these sectors.
 - Coding for Women Bootcamp.
 - a wide range of taster sessions, at intermediate level.
 - a new paid internship programme due to start with a digital company in April.
- Overall, 30 new courses have been developed and 600 Londoners have enrolled onto new training and education courses provided by the hub. The team believes that it is making a real impact. The Academy is actively building links with industry and is looking to widen its reach and participation, connecting and working with the under-represented groups that the GLA wishes to support, and which CCCG also does naturally as part of its role as a large FE college serving London boroughs.
- The Digital Skills Academy differs from the Green Skills Academy in that courses are delivered across the Group's colleges. The majority are delivered as live on-line courses, but the hub is also starting to deliver some in-person courses, e.g. today's first Women in Coding class at Regents Park.
- The courses delivered are non-accredited, although they are co-designed with, and endorsed by, industry partners. Discussions are taking place with a view to offering some accredited courses. This includes supporting individuals towards industry roles around cyber security, software engineering, and cloud management, which will take some time and experience to develop, and also relevant apprenticeship programmes, for which the team has already started to engage with apprenticeship providers.

- With respect to the non-accredited nature of the courses, the Executive Principal explained that the Group has a wider established practice of offering short introductory non-accredited courses, from which c. 47% of learners progress to other programmes. He also advised that the Group is working with Open College Network London with the aim of providing awarding body accreditation for some courses, whilst badging courses for quality assurance is an alternative for courses that cannot be accredited.
- In response to a question about Essential Digital Skills Qualifications (EDSQ), it was clarified that such courses are delivered by colleges across the Group, not through the Academy Hub.
- The hub's ultimate goals are to be the provider that people and industry come to when looking for talent, and to provide support into roles that are sustainable. The main challenge is achieving targets for job outcomes. So far, the hub has achieved only 13% of its target, with 14 Londoners progressing into good work. Several measures have been implemented to address this.
- As with all the Academy Hubs, the team is keen to have governor support, in terms of access to governor networks and governors helping to broker connections with industry partners and potential employers.

3.3 CREATIVE SKILLS ACADEMY REPORT

Sharon Wallace, Head of Creative Skills Academy, presented the Creative Skills Academy report and the following was noted:

- The CCCG hub is the largest and most successful of the four Mayoral Creative Skills Academy Hubs.
- The Academy is a collaboration between CCCG, Film London and Middlesex University.
- The team has worked hard to establish employer links, engaging from the outset with some of the larger industry employers: Warner Brothers, Netflix, Angels and other major companies in order to gain a direct insight into recruitment issues faced by the industry. It is clear from those discussions that gaps include 'soft skills' as well as technical skills.
- This research informed course design, with all courses directly linked to roles in the industry. They include Camera Trainees, Broadcast Journalism, After Effects, Graphic Design and Special FX Make-up and Hair. Also, during the pandemic, many people in middle management roles left the industry, so this is an area of further focus, working closely with Film London.
- All courses are run by specialists currently working in the industry, as up to date industry skills are essential.
- The team is actively getting out into the community, working with community partners including local councils and also running Insight sessions, both online and in local community centres. Today, the Academy has participated in a New Black Film Collective event, as a member of the panel presenting to filmmakers trying to get into work.
- The Academy runs a Live Projects Network, where learners work on briefs for employers and gain valuable work experience. Sessions are facilitated by an industry professional and at the end participants receive feedback from industry and are able to add the experience to their CV and showreel. They also receive a reference, which also helps, particularly graduates and others who are new to the industry.
- A challenging area of activity is helping older members of the community to find work – some people have skills in older software packages, but not current ones, so the Academy is putting together programmes that enable them to transfer their skills.

The committee discussed ways in which governors can help to promote the hub. It was highlighted that the creative industry is something of a 'closed shop', where 'who you know' is an important door-opener, although there are signs that the industry is starting to recognise that there is an issue regarding underrepresented groups, and that doors are starting to open. So help with job outcomes is a key area. For Q1, these were c. 16 of target (i.e. c.110 people into work), although this is expected to rise during Q2.

An issue faced is that there is a lot of freelance working in the creative industries, and whilst those workers who have completed courses may be successful in gaining work, this does not meet the GLA's current Good Outcomes criteria. This issue has been raised with the GLA and they have indicated that they recognise that the way the industry works needs to be taken into consideration, although no changes have yet been agreed. There is also often a time lag between workers getting trained and securing work, which is longer than many people realise. The CCCG hub and other

creative hubs are meeting with and lobbying the GLA in relation to the high targets that have been set and it is hoped that this will be addressed.

The Chair offered to provide an introduction to UCL's East London School of Cultural and Creative Industries. AS

3.4 HOSPITALITY SKILLS ACADEMY REPORT

Vince Kelly, Head of Hospitality Skills Academy, presented a report and the following was noted:

- The main challenges are different from those faced by the other three hubs, given the significant number of vacancies that currently exist in the hospitality industry arising from the impact of the pandemic and the exodus of staff from the industry. The main challenges are attracting people to work in the industry and training them to a level of confidence to perform in their roles.
- Significant emphasis and effort have been focused upon building close links with the employer community, including the creation of industry advisory boards.
- Key messages conveyed to employers include that employee pay needs to start at a minimum of the London Living Wage. Employers must also be flexible, offering flexible work shifts to accommodate the needs of employees to attract new staff into the industry (including older workers), and also need to consider opportunities for staff in some roles to work from home, where this is possible. Employers are listening and responding to this feedback. Talking to larger groups of employers has helped.
- The hub undertakes significant outreach into the community, offering taster sessions, which work well. It also offers short courses – e.g. its 4-week Hospitality Sector Work Academy Programme, which includes an experience day with an employer. The latter include Harrods, The Royal Household, Tottenham Football Ground, NH Hotels and many others. Employers have shown a real interest in providing opportunities.
- The hub is also working closely to support employer needs – e.g. a potential opportunity to work with Fullers, who are looking to provide 300 of their front of house staff with the additional skills needed to work in behind the scenes catering.
- The hub's provision differs from the specialist hospitality training offered by WKC's Hospitality and Culinary Arts department at the Victoria Centre. The latter offer is 'high end', e.g. its 3 year Diploma course is for professional chefs. Early learnings in running the hub were not to compete with this offer or to try to place people into highly skilled professional roles. The hub works with employers such as Accor Group, Mercure Hotels, Ibis Hotels, Imperial Hotel Group, IHG, Greene King, Wagamama, Pret etc, which generally offer good career paths with established support systems.
- Support that the hub is seeking from governors includes signposting the academy to their contacts, helping to promote the great work that the academy is doing and help in securing sponsorship opportunities. Mark Isherwood encouraged the team to engage with Camden's Inclusive Economy Department.

The Chair thanked all of the Academy Heads for their reports and the useful insights provided, and he noted that a number of follow-up opportunities had been identified, including opportunities for governors to provide support.

The committee advised that it would be helpful for governors to be provided with a short 'What's in it for you' paper, that provides a cohesive, convincing and consistent narrative, explaining the benefits to employers of working with the Group and its hubs, in order to assist governors in encourage engagement. It was noted that the Group has previously produced a brochure to support employer engagement, but also that the range of employers that the Group engages with is diverse, which sometimes requires more targeted messaging.

The committee requested that performance of the Academy hubs against the GLA targets is included in the Group Quality report to future meetings. KH

4. UPDATE ON T LEVELS PLANNING

The committee received a report and the following was noted:

- From Sept 2023, the Group will commence delivery of 4 of the new T Level qualifications, one in each of Digital, Health, Science and Early Years and Childcare. These will be run at a mix of WKC and CIC campuses. CONEL will not participate in this initial rollout, but is planned to deliver T Levels from September 2024.
- The intent, starting with a small number of programmes, is to deliver T Levels alongside existing vocational and technical qualifications until funding for the latter ceases to be provided.

- The Group plans to progress to deliver all the available T Levels from September 2024, for which further careful planning and preparations will be undertaken.
- The agreed and approved entry requirements for the T Level programme are much the same as A Levels and other Level 3 courses, which usually require four to five GCSEs at grades 9-4.
- The Group has already won the bids to fund the transformational projects at the Soho Centre, Centre for Business and Technology (CBAT) and Tottenham and those projects are under way. 3 further bids have been submitted for wave 5 for additional funding for further T Levels. A Specialist Equipment Allocation grant of c. £1.5m to support T level delivery has also been received. The latter must be spent by December, but s once-only funding for each T Level, so careful planning is taking place to ensure that it is spent most wisely.

The committee discussed the opportunities and challenges of engaging with local schools, which it is regarded in many cases mistakenly regard themselves as capable of delivering T Levels. There is a wide divergence in the approachability, depending upon how schools perceive the future of T Level delivery, with very little at this early stage in terms of support from Local Authorities. In this context, however, the Group is taking a proactive approach to influence careers advisors in all the local schools that it works with. This includes a dinner currently planned to which school careers advisors will be invited to hear about the Group's plans for T Levels.

The committee asked whether the team is confident in its ability and resources to deliver both T Levels and legacy programmes at the same time and was assured regarding this. Planning for delivery of the initial programmes has been taking place for the past year, with training supported by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF). Discussions are also now taking place about delivering further staff training for the wider delivery from September 2024.

5. GROUP QUALITY

The committee received and considered the Group Quality Update and Quality Improvement Plans. The following was noted:

- Attendance and retention is holding up well compared to last year.
- The most significant issue is recruitment of 16-18 year-olds. Despite all actions and activities that have been put in place to keep applications and offers high, these remain below prior year. The committee discussed this further. The Executive Principal explained that recruitment has historically come from c. one third internal progression, one-third applications and offers and one-third walk-ins. The main reason for below target performance last year was the low level of walk-ins. The best outcome likely this year is that recruitment will be held at the same level as last year, with growth taking place over the next two to three years;
- In response to a question as to whether there will be an opportunity going forward for the Group to deliver T Levels in school campuses, it was noted that there are concerns amongst schools that T Levels pose a threat to the future of sixth forms. Funding of these arrangements can also be difficult. Camden are understood, however, to be looking at how this might work, and the Group is potentially well-placed to be a part of that delivery in view of its established industry links. Whilst many schools are expected to do everything they can to hold on to this provision, there is also however the risk of private training providers seizing the many opportunities that the change-over to T Levels will bring.
- The committee also received and noted the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). This has been updated following the Ofsted Inspection, although it already included the majority of areas for improvement highlighted by the inspection. The QIP will be further updated and brought to the to the next meeting to show progress achieved.

6. APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

The CCCT Managing Director presented the Apprenticeship Update and the following issues were highlighted:

- Apprenticeship starts in-year remain below target. This is due primarily to delayed starts to programmes by employers. A Vet cohort due to start in January has been delayed until after Easter. A Visual Effects specialist programme, with links to the Creative Academy was expected to recruit a full cohort in September, but delays in the industry have meant that interviews took place today. Some engineering programmes have been delayed for a full year.
- The sales team is failing to be as proactive as it should be, so a realignment of roles is about to be undertaken, aimed at making these much more business driven and proactive.
- Achievement is above that of the past two years, but is starting to be impacted by industry issues. e.g. achievement rates for chefs is normally amongst the highest, but are lower this

year because some employers are so short-staffed that they cannot allow students time to come to college. They are therefore offering them full time jobs that are better paid, with uncertainty as to whether they will then come back at a future stage to complete their training.

The interim CEO highlighted that the matter of employer engagement had featured prominently across the range of areas of delivery discussed during this meeting. He noted that maximising the potential that is afforded by the size, breadth and quality of the Group presents a significant challenge to be addressed as a core aspect of the Group's marketing and communications within the context of the Group's overall strategy.

The Chair emphasised the importance of a Group approach and a collective effort, so as to achieve more in relation to employer engagement than teams are able to deliver through individual efforts – to support the important objective of getting people into work. It was noted that work has already been undertaken on a cross-Group employer engagement strategy and development plan, which was primarily focused on supporting the skills recognition part of the Ofsted inspection, and that this provides a foundation for further development of the approach. The Executive Principal advised that there is work underway, examples of steps taken being the placing of responsibility for all industry placements for T Levels with one member of staff, and work on building a CRM system to support the sharing of information relating to contact with employers.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 11th May 2023 5:00pm

Thursday 22nd June 2023 5:00pm