

MINUTES

Meeting: Higher Level Skills Advisory Group

Date: 13 June 2019

Time: 10.00am

Place: Room F, 169 Union Street,
London SE1 0LL

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Present:

Members:

George Johnston, Skills for Londoners Business Partnership member (Chair)
Simon Ashworth, Association of Employment and Learning Providers
Katie Bell, Middlesex University
Pat Carvalho, Harrow College Uxbridge College
Professor Martin Doel, University College London
Ruben Hale, University of Arts Awarding Body
David Hillier, South Thames College Group
Yvonne Kelly, Barking & Dagenham College
David Lee, Queen Mary University London
Mary Vine-Morris, Association of Colleges

GLA Officers:

Forogh Rahmani, Senior Manager – Strategy, Policy and Relationships, Skills and Employment
James Lee, Principal Policy Officer, Skills and Employment
Beth Wheaton, Senior Policy Officer, Skills and Employment (clerk)
Matt Bailey, Senior Policy Officer, Skills and Employment

1 Introduction and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the inaugural meeting of the Advisory Group and led a round of introductions.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Nichola Hay, Yolande Burgess, Graeme Atherton, Dr Bob Gilworth, Rebecca Plant and Philippa Lloyd (David Lee attended in Philippa's absence).

2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 Terms of reference

- 3.1 The Advisory Group received the terms of reference for the Group, which were approved by its parent body, the Skills for Londoners Board, on 10 April 2019.
- 3.2 **RESOLVED:**
 - (a) **The terms of reference for the Higher Level Skills Advisory Group were noted; and**
 - (b) **It was noted that George Johnston, Member of the Skills for Londoners (SfL) Business Partnership has been appointed to Chair the Group; and Nichola Hay (Member of the SfL Board) has been appointed as Deputy Chair.**

4 Government's agenda and the Mayor's role

- 4.1 Officers delivered a presentation to Members, outlining the current state of higher level skills in London and led a discussion on the Post-18 Review of Education and Funding.
- 4.2 Members offered their comments on the findings of the review, including: the importance of quality of Level 4-5 provision and its social value rather than a narrow focus on number of starts; the value of skills rather than qualifications; the importance of linking any future analysis to the Local Industrial Strategy and taking a sector-based approach; the importance for Level 4 and 5 of the pipeline of learners from Level 2 and 3.
- 4.3 **RESOLVED:**

The presentation and subsequent discussion were noted.

5 Skills for Londoners Framework consultation – feedback on higher level skills

- 5.1 Officers presented an initial analysis of the responses to the Skills for Londoners Framework consultation related to higher level skills. The Mayor has consulted on proposed changes to the AEB in Year 2, as well as areas for further development, as part of the Skills for Londoners consultation. A final report will be published later this year.
- 5.2 It was noted that any potential follow-up or pilot work should include a range of provider types.
- 5.3 **RESOLVED:**
- The presentation and subsequent discussion were noted.**

6 Higher Level Digital Skills & European Social Fund (ESF) programme

- 6.1 This agenda item was addressed under item 4.

7 Higher level skills research specification

- 7.1 For the remainder of the meeting, members discussed the proposed approach to a GLA research project on Higher Level Skills, which the GLA will commission an external partner to undertake. Members offered their feedback on the proposed scope and focus of the research.
- 7.2 Members raised a number of points, including the importance of understanding what is distinctive about London's higher-level skills system and the drivers of demand for higher level provision both now and in the future. This includes the Mayor's role in driving this demand. In addition, it was noted that taking a sectoral approach to any analysis could be beneficial.
- 7.3 The interim findings from the research will be discussed at the next meeting of the Advisory Group.
- 7.4 **RESOLVED:**
- (a) The proposed aims of the higher level skills research the GLA intends to commission were endorsed.**

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- (b) The comments provided during the meeting will be incorporated into the specification for the research consultancy and circulated to the Advisory Group for comment.**
- (c) Members to notify the clerk if they/their organisation has any intention to bid for this research to ensure the draft specification is not circulated to those intending to bid.**

8 Date of next meeting

- 8.1 The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed and is expected to take place in November 2019. It was noted that 19 – 23 November should be avoided due to a number of events taking place in the sector.

9 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent

- 9.1 There was no urgent business.

10 Close of Meeting

- 10.1 The meeting closed at midday.

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