












Minutes

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Audit Committee

Minutes

Meeting Time and Date	0830 on 17 September 2024
Meeting Location	Zoom Online
Members	Guy Jones-Owen (Chair)  Alex Lane (Vice Chair)  Darrell DeSouza  Stephen Way  Antony Young (Independent) 
Auditors	Leisyen Cox (Scrutton Bland)  Clive Makombera (RSM)  Thomas Parker (RSM) 
Participants	Peter Brammall (Principal)  Paul Smith (Deputy Principal) 
Minute Taker	Jennifer Swift (Director of Governance) 

	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies <p>1.1. Apologies were received from Stephen Way and Anthony Young.</p> <p>1.2. No apologies were sent by Darrel DeSouza and Alex Lane. The Chair has asked the Director of Governance to get in touch to check with governors regarding their absence and whether the move to Teams for these meetings has affected them.</p>	Director of Governance (Completed)
2. Declaration of Interests <p>2.1. None.</p>	
3. Internal audit reports (Decision) <p>3.1. Leisyen Cox (Scrutton Bland) attended the meeting and provided governors with an overview of the audit reports produced by Scrutton Bland since the last meeting.</p> <p><u>Anti-fraud audit: Significant Assurance</u></p> <p>3.2. These were follow up recommendations from the report in 2022-2023.</p> <p>3.3. It was highlighted that the policies and procedures reflect good practice.</p> <p>3.4. The whistleblowing policy was found to be appropriate.</p> <p>3.5. It was agreed to review these policies on an annual basis and to communicate this to the relevant members of staff.</p>	Deputy Principal

[illegible]

<p>3.18. There are no current plans to move back to ITrent and the college has implemented manual processes to track completion rates.</p> <p>3.19. The Chair commented that he is disappointed to learn that this recruitment process has not been 'nailed down' and believes the manual document will require a lot of chasing. The Deputy Principal noted that a new recruitment system had been implemented from September 2024 to improve recruitment processes/controls/applicant experience.</p> <p>3.20. The Chair asked the Director of Governance to raise actions follow up for the next meeting.</p>	
<p>Resolved to:</p> <p>For governors' to receive an update on the Appraisal and recruitment processes at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Director of Governance</p>
<p>3.21. The Chair questioned whether the system is fit for purpose given the manual nature and inability to automatically extrapolate data and expressed frustration that this automation had not been implemented, especially when deemed a medium risk.</p> <p>3.22. The Principal confirmed that the system had previously been an inhibitor contributing to the risk and the focus had been upon delivering real change in the uptake of the process, which has now been achieved through the higher completion rates. The subsequent improvement via automation is being considered as part of the College's broader systems investment review.</p> <p>3.23. The Chair queried Number 11 on the report (income debtors) and whether this is purely around students or if it is also to do with services provided, fees due etc.</p> <p>3.24. The Principal and Scrutton Bland confirmed that this will be based on several factors.</p> <p>3.25. The Deputy Principal added that the College is keen to gain comfort that they are on top of this as there have been issues in the past with debtors over 90 days due to challenges with the system.</p> <p>3.26. The Deputy Principal confirmed that resources had been spread thinly recently and this has impacted the finance department as there have been gaps in the team. There is a focus and plan for this, and reporting will improve.</p> <p>3.27. The Deputy Principle added that he is happy to provide updates on the reporting of income debtors at the Audit committee.</p> <p>3.28. There has been a great deal of time reviewing the recommendations of this audit and many of these areas</p>	<p>Deputy Principal</p>

<p>are currently being tackled and many have already been responded to.</p> <p>3.29. The Principal agreed and confirmed that the 15 high priority recommendations have all been assessed and implemented.</p> <p>3.30. The Chair added that this audit report has been shared with the new internal auditors so that they have sight of this. Although he is aware there is a fair bit to do, he can understand the rationale.</p> <p><u>Risk and Assurance Annual Report: Adequate and Effective opinion.</u></p> <p>3.31. The auditor discussed the final report with governors and confirmed that the ratings were on par with other clients.</p> <p>3.32. The Chair requested that this report be added to the November meeting as part of the pack.</p> <p>3.33. Both the Principal and Deputy Principle thanked Scrutton Bland for all their work on this report and over the years.</p> <p>Resolved to</p> <p>Note and agree the above External audit reports.</p> <p>Leisyen Cox (Scrutton Bland) left the meeting.</p>	<p>Deputy Principal</p>
<p>4. Minutes (Decision)</p> <p>4.1. The minutes from the last meeting were not available on Decision Time for governors to review ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>4.2. This was a result of the Handover to the Director of Governance and this element of the meeting agenda was missed.</p> <p>4.3. It was agreed that the minutes of the Summer audit meeting would be added to the November agenda for approval.</p> <p>Resolved to:</p> <p>Include the Summer audit meeting minutes to November's committee agenda.</p>	<p>Director of Governance(Completed)</p>

<p>5. Internal Audit Plan (Information)</p> <p>5.1. Thomas Parker and Clive Makombera (RSM) joined the meeting.</p> <p>5.2. The Chair sent apologies for the absent governors and confirmed that the committee is missing a couple of key people.</p> <p>5.3. The Chair asked if RSM could provide another high-level run through when everyone is available and RSM confirmed that they would.</p> <p>5.4. The auditors introduced themselves and asked if governors had read the plan.</p> <p>5.5. RSM have proposed a plan for Year 1 which is outlined in the Paper.</p> <p>5.6. The Chair confirmed that the Audit committee meets in March, June and November and asked RSM what their preferred month would be to deliver the report for next year.</p> <p>5.7. RSM confirmed that their preference would be at the start of academic year and therefore requested this to be done in the June meeting.</p> <p>5.8. The Principal confirmed that it would be a good idea to cover the areas that they want to prioritise and were pertinent to what the governors are discussing at the GB next week.</p> <p>5.9. RSM confirmed that they will ensure there is a full transfer of any outstanding audit recommendations and a handover meeting to ensure that nothing would slip through the cracks.</p> <p>5.10. RSM confirmed that they will provide the external assurance on this.</p> <p>5.11. The Chair apologised for the high absence rate at the meeting, and it was agreed to postpone the delivery of this report until the November committee meeting.</p> <p>Resolved to:</p> <p>Invite RSM to deliver their report in the November meeting when more Governors will be present.</p> <p>Resolved to:</p> <p>Defer the approval of the plan until the November meeting. RSM agreed to begin working on the areas of the plan that were agreed with the Chair & SLT, due to the timescales and the need to gain traction.</p>	<p>Director of Governance</p>
<p>6. AOB</p> <p>6.1. None.</p>	
<p>7. Date of next meeting</p>	

The next Audit Committee meeting will take place on 11 November 2024 at 0830.	
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APPROVED MINUTES			
CHAIR:	Guy Jones-Owen	DATE:	
APPROVAL:	Remote confirmation: Or signed:		