



## QAS Committee meeting

22 October 2021, 12.00 – 13.00

<b>Attending:</b>	Victor Olowe (Chair), Ruth Thomas, Alison Carr, Iain McGrory, Alison Carr (lay), Helen Brown, Douglas Green, Scott Cameron.
<b>Executive Staff:</b>	Katie Wood, Karen Cross, Emma Burns
<b>Apologies:</b>	Tze Leong Chan, Sophie Dignan.
<b>Dial in details:</b>	[REDACTED]

Item	Title	Action
1.	<b>Welcome, apologies and conflicts</b>	
1.1	No conflicts of interest were declared.	
2.	<b>[REDACTED] response to request for additional information</b>	
2.1	<p>The Committee indicated that there was not much detail from the organisation on the quality and peer review aspects [REDACTED] The Committee queried whether the incident could have been identified, stopped or controlled much earlier however it was noted that employees are generally subject to the other firm's procedures when on secondment which may have contributed to the incident not coming to light sooner.</p> <p>It is useful the organisation had advised that they had changed their interview process, however the Committee had hoped to have seen more detail on lessons learned. The Committee appreciated the openness and honesty of the firm in reporting this matter in its annual return.</p> <p>The Committee agreed they were content with the response and suggested the organisation provide an update on the progress of the changes in their next annual return. <b>Action.</b></p>	Executive
3.	<b>QAS Committee Terms of Reference</b>	
3.1	<p>The Committee discussed the proposed changes to its Terms of Reference. There was a suggestion to change Section 14 of the terms of reference so it could read "having regard to DEI". There was some discussion about whether this placed the onus on the Chair or the Committee and it was agreed that this was a joint responsibility for all members of the Committee.</p> <p>The Chair suggested changing the text to show the Committee is open to changing the term "volunteer actuary members" to demonstrate that students are welcome to apply for Committee roles, not just qualified actuary members. This was agreed with by the rest of the Committee, although it should not be made a requirement to have a student member as that could cause restrictions</p>	



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	<p>due to the size of the Committee. It was agreed that ‘volunteer members’, who are members of the IFoA be capitalised to become a defined term. It was agreed that the Volunteer Information Pack (VIP) should be referred to as a footnote linking to the definitions in that document.</p> <p>The Committee indicated that they would like to retain strong wording to state a requirement for international members particularly as there have been a number of international applications recently. The Committee would therefore be concerned if there is no international experience within the group. However, the Committee agreed on using the word ‘desirable’ rather than having a requirement in order not to make the terms of reference too restrictive.</p> <p>The Committee suggested that the references to ‘Regulation Board’ should be amended to ‘Regulatory Board’.</p> <p>The Committee concluded that it is not necessary to detail delegation to the Executive, following consideration of the suggestion in the proposed amendment to section 2 as the annual returns review process is still ultimately a Committee responsibility. It was suggested that some wording should be inserted under the responsibilities section to include a broad delegation provision to future proof the Terms of Reference.</p> <p>The Committee also suggested changing the word ‘comprises’ when describing quorum to ‘is’.</p> <p>Subject to the amendments above, the Terms of Reference (ToR) were approved and the Committee agreed that the updated ToR should be referred</p>	Executive
<b>4.</b>	<b>APS QA1</b>	
	<p><b>4.1</b> The Committee discussed the proposed changes made to the APS QA1.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the question posed by the Executive on page 2 relating to the proposal that section 2.3 be updated to simplify the wording, which relates to section 5 of the Annual Return form. It was suggested that the sentence should be amended to enable Organisations to demonstrate that they ensure policies and procedures are updated and monitored as necessary and are able to provide examples to demonstrate that they have done so.</p> <p>The Committee outlined their desired preferences from accredited organisations in relation to the annual returns, which included be able to monitor and review the organisations activities, identify what the organisation is doing well and identify what the organisation could do better. The Committee would also like the organisation in their annual returns to tell them about these specifics.</p>	



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	<p>The Committee also suggested changing the wording to be simpler with clear and obvious questions rather than the current wording which is open to interpretation. The Committee also agreed that it is essential for organisations to provide examples on how they are meeting the outcomes. It was agreed that the Executive would redraft the wording to simplify it.</p> <p>Returning to the discussion on APS QA1, the Committee considered whether the Sub-outcome, 'Relationship with Users' should be part of the 'Organisational Culture' outcome. The Committee concluded that because of the positive indicators linked to "Relationship with Users) it does fit with 'Organisational Culture' Outcome rather than Professionalism, as Professionalism is much more narrowly defined.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the 'Definitions' section of the APS and suggested changing the word 'or' to 'and' where Effective Quality Assurance is mentioned. No comments were made on page 4 of the document.</p> <p>It was suggested to make an amendment at the Organisational Culture definition to read, '...in QAS organisations Members will understand...their organisation adopts...'</p> <p>The Committee queried if there was duplication within the document around speaking up and the Executive explained that it is important to also mention speaking up in the DEI section as DEI is a new outcome. The Committee agreed with the importance of the intended emphasis in relation to DEI but suggested that the phrase 'speaking up' should be removed from the DEI positive indicators and be replaced with the word "raise" to avoid confusion between this and the "Speaking up" Sub-outcome.</p> <p>The Committee agreed they are content with the revised APS QA1 subject to the changes discussed. <b>Action.</b></p>	Executive
<b>4.</b>	<b>DEI Addendum to QAS Handbook</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<p>The Committee discussed the DEI addendum in the QAS Handbook.</p> <p>The Committee suggested 1.3 be amended to read, 'Equity means that all individuals have access to the support and resources they need' thereby removing the verb "receive".</p> <p>The Executive informed the Committee that DEI is an Outcome that will likely be added to the IFoA's Actuaries' Code in coming months. The Chair indicated that the Committee should take the opportunity to share their view while noting that the text may be superseded by the Council's own policy in the near future.</p>	



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	<p>The Committee suggested that Diversity is also about a variety of skills and experience rather than just individuals and suggested that 1.3 should be updated to reflect this.</p> <p>The Committee also suggested that there should be a statement in 1.4 to explain that DEI also contributes to the success of the business.</p> <p>The Committee highlighted that there are more than 4 positive indicators in relation to DEI and it may be useful to add more in order that the text is not restrictive at 4.5 of the document. It was noted that this section is lifted from APS QA1 and it was agreed that this should be made clearer to avoid confusion,</p> <p>The Committee agreed that 1.1 should be expanded as DEI is not only about establishing but also fostering the right culture..</p> <p>The Committee suggested that the best practice examples in section 12 should be amended slightly to expand on the point that DEI training is not solely to ensure management buy in.</p> <p>The Committee commended the Executive for the proposed amendments particularly the new DEI section, which was drafted from scratch and endorsed the proposed revised QAS Handbook subject to the amendments discussed.</p> <p><b>Action.</b></p>	Executive
<b>5.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
	<b>5.1</b> No points were raised.	
	<b>Next Meetings:</b> <b>06 December 2021 – Quarterly Meeting</b>	