



**QUALITY IN CAREERS CONSORTIUM BOARD**  
**Public Notes of the Board Meeting**

**ONLINE TEAMS MEETING FOR THE BOARD**  
**12.30 Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

**Members of the Board present:**

Paul Chubb (Chair), Cathy Thompson (Vice Chair & Independent CEG invitee), Ryan Gibson (Vice Chair & Independent CEG invitee), Erica Rowell (Quality in Careers Director), Claire Green (ASCL), Janet Colledge (CDI Careers educator), Natalie Highfield (NAHT), Deepa Jethwa (SFCA), Eleanor Perkins (HMC).

**Observers in attendance:** Helen Lucarelli (DfE).

**Apologies:** Oliver Jenkin (CDI), Katherine Horler (Careers England), Jenny Beaumont (Licensed Awarding Bodies), Clare Worsdale (DfE) and Nina Chorzelewski (AoC)

**10/25 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS BY PAUL CHUBB, CHAIR**

Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting in his new capacity as Chair of the Consortium Board. He also welcomed new Board members: Claire Green representing ASCL and Natalie Highfield representing NAHT and Erica Rowell as newly appointed Quality in Careers Director.

**11/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- i. Paul informed the Board of the reason for Katherine Horler's absence. She had recently been appointed as Chair of Trustees at a local Hospice and had been asked to attend a meeting with them today. On behalf of the Board Paul wished her well in her new role.
- ii. Paul welcomed Oliver Jenkin as a new member of the Board, replacing Sue Alder, and informed members that Oliver sent his apologies as he was attending the CDI National Conference.
- iii. Helen Lucarelli gave apologies on behalf of Clare Worsdale who had been called to another meeting.
- iv. Erica Rowell gave apologies for Jenny Beaumont who was unable to attend for personal reasons.
- v. Paul then moved to the next business advising that as in previous meetings items on the agenda were once more marked as "for information" (i.e. briefing the Board but

not expected to be discussed at any length) and “for decision” (i.e. requiring Board approval to be implemented).

## **12/25 NOTES OF LAST MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting (25<sup>th</sup> March 2025) were approved with no matters arising.

## **13/25 QUALITY IN CAREERS DIRECTOR’S REPORT: FOR INFORMATION**

In her first report to the Board, Erica summarised the activities that have been undertaken since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025:

### **i. Liaison with DfE**

- Monthly meetings had continued to take place with Clare Worsdale and Helen Lucarelli. Paul in his capacity as Chair had also attended these meetings.
- Clare and Helen had both been very supportive by offering advice and information on the Department’s monitoring of the revised Statutory Guidance and updated Gatsby Benchmarks. Erica would provide them with the analysis completed annually by the CEC on Award Holders achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Clare had advised that in September 2025 the Department sent out communications to Independent Training Providers (ITPs) on how to align themselves with the Revised Statutory Guidance 2025 and on how to work towards achieving the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Erica has regularly updated Clare and Helen on the Consortium’s progress with nationally endorsing the Licensed Awarding Bodies’ Primary School Careers Education Awards. The Department continued to be keen to see a national Quality in Careers Primary Standard developed.

### **ii. Liaison with the CEC**

- Monthly meetings had continued to take place with Rachel Green who had been extremely supportive, and collaboration between Quality in Careers and the CEC had continued to strengthen. Paul in his capacity as Chair of the Consortium had continued to attend these meetings.
- Rachel had initiated links with several personnel from within the CEC which had enabled Erica to extend the influence of Quality in Careers across different departments of the CEC:
  - Alison Sadler Post-16 Manager at the CEC to collaborate on the CEC’s work with ITPs.
  - Kate Roberts, Head of Careers from Learning Curve, a large ITP which was preparing to undertake the Quality in Careers Standard.
  - Contacts in the Association of Employers and Learning Providers (AELP).
  - Isabel Hutton, Senior Manager Strategic Development at the CEC. She had been working on the DfE backed primary careers pilot: “Start Small: Dream Big”.

- Rachel Green shared in a recent meeting that over 1000 schools had now completed the Careers Impact Review and she hoped this should start to reflect on numbers moving on with increased confidence to work towards the Quality in Careers Standard.

### **iii. Communications with Stakeholders**

- As newly appointed Director Erica had met with many of the stakeholders involved with Quality in Careers.
- During May and June, she had held online meetings with all the Licensed Awarding Bodies. They were asked about their approach to delivery of the Standard, how they supported institutions to complete the award, how they marketed their Awarding Body and finally what support they expected from the Quality in Careers Director going forward. Some issues were raised by them:
  - Cost to the institutions: There was a strong feeling that some are put off by the expense. For some Awarding Bodies it was not a commercially viable enterprise but ‘fits’ with their ethos or supports other career guidance offerings. The question was asked about the possibility of DfE or other sources of funding for the future. The Board recalled that Paul had submitted a proposal to the DfE for a “Quality in Careers bursary” grant to be available to schools and colleges; that proposal remained live, it had not been accepted nor rejected by the Department.
  - Quality in Careers to have a higher visibility within the Career Development sector nationally.
- From November David Morgan, CEO of the CDI, and Oliver Jenkin CDI Senior Professional Development and Standards Manager would be meeting with Erica bi-monthly to consider ways to work together to embed the ethos of quality assurance across the Career Development sector and to widen the participation of schools and colleges in the external accreditation of their careers programmes.
- Erica had attended and been invited to conferences and events to ‘fly the flag’ for Quality in Careers.
- Enquiries about the Standard made to the website continued, with an interesting ‘spike’ in May – July (18 enquires) reflecting Quality in Careers presence at events during this time. A record was being kept of website enquiries which in the future would help to gauge if attendance at conferences and events gave a good return on investment.
- A monthly newsletter had been created for circulation to Licensed Awarding Bodies and the Professional Team with Paul circulating this to Board Members. The newsletter provided information gained from meetings with the DfE and CEC, and updated stakeholders on the activities undertaken by the Director. There was a section for the Chair of the Board to contribute on topics associated with the Board such as the on-boarding of new members. Feedback from Awarding Bodies had been positive.
- Erica was invited to attend the Quality in Careers Consultative Group by the Chair Jenny Beaumont and Organising Secretary Claire Nix to formally introduce herself and outline objectives for the year. It had been agreed by the Group that Erica would continue to attend all meetings, as regular attendance clarified operational aspects of the delivery of the Quality in Careers Standard and she was able to comment and answer questions on issues raised at the meeting.

- Erica was currently following up Schools & Colleges previously accredited by former Awarding Bodies no longer trading. There were a significant number of accredited institutions whose 3-year period of accreditation by a former Awarding Body was coming to an end. To seek to retain their engagement Erica would be contacting them offering to introduce them to Awarding Bodies if they had not already chosen their preferred provider. The aim was to have contacted all such institutions by the end of this year.
- Deepa Jethwa asked if Erica would provide her with a list of sixth form colleges who no longer had an Awarding Body. During her regular college visits, she would discuss the Standard and direct colleges to our current Licensed Awarding Bodies to explore reaccreditation of the Standard. Erica thanked Deepa and agreed to provide the list.

#### **iv. Case studies**

- Erica continued to ask institutions and Awarding Bodies to provide case studies so that the website was up to date. She was keen to acquire case studies from educational institutions such as PRUs, alternative education, independent schools, multi academy trusts, including their primary schools, and international schools so that we could demonstrate that the Quality in Careers Standard could be effective across all facets of education
- Deepa Jethwa from SFCA offered to secure a case study from a school which had been involved with the Quality in Careers Standard from primary through to their sixth form college. The Board thanked Deepa for offering to provide this case study.
- Ryan Gibson commented on the importance of collaboration with other organisations who could support the work of the Quality in Careers Standard. He suggested that contact should be made with: The Association for MAT Leaders, teaching unions, Career Hubs and Combined Authorities. Erica agreed to investigate these suggestions.
- The Board welcomed all this news and congratulated Erica on her performance since being appointed Director.

#### **14/25 WORK PLANS: FOR DECISION**

- i. The Board received and approved the detailed schedule of the confirmed work plans for the Standard and the schedule of Relicensing Panels and CQIRs until March 2026.
- ii. The Board agreed that the executive committee comprising of Chair (Paul) and the 2 Vice Chairs (Cathy & Ryan) would advise the Director (Erica) on the preparations to replace Claire Nix after her retirement in July 2026. The Board agreed that the CDI should be approached to publicise a message conveying the Consortium's interest in connecting with *"experienced careers professional with a passionate commitment to quality assuring careers education and guidance, Erica would be pleased to hear from you and potentially add you to our 'register' of potential Professional Advisers should an opportunity arise"*. David Morgan had agreed to publish such a message in his CEO email to members in December.

- iii. Ryan Gibson suggested that depending on the interest shown an online meeting could be set up to brief enquirers on the role of the Professional Adviser by Claire Nix and Erica. The proposal to shadow members of the professional team could be arranged once a clear commitment had been undertaken by the potential new professional team member(s). A recommendation for an appointment would then come to the March 2026 Board, and if the Board accepted the recommendation, then a formal induction would be arranged between April and June with a formal handover from Claire Nix in July 2026.
- iv. Jenny Beaumont (as Chair of the Consultative Group) and Erica would be meeting on 8th December to discuss any further suggestions in respect of generating interest in possibilities to join the Professional team.
- v. With reference to the situation with the Hull and East Yorkshire Awarding Body Ryan Gibson suggested that to mitigate risk to the Quality in Careers Standard delivery that the Consortium should be proactive in asking the Awarding Bodies to identify potential risks to their operation including financial ones so that the Consortium might offer support if required/possible.
- vi. Cathy Thompson suggested that the question “how can the Consortium help you now and in the future?” should be asked at all Licensing/Relicensing panels and each annual CQIR.
  - **The Board approved the current work plans.**
  - **The Board authorised Erica to work with the Executive Committee (Paul, Ryan and Cathy) on the strategy to secure an additional Professional Adviser in readiness for Claire’s retirement in July 2026 with a recommendation for a potential appointment to come to the March 2026 Board meeting.**

## **15/25 DIRECTOR’S REPORT ON PROGRESS WITH FUTURE PROJECTS**

- i. **Progress with the National Endorsement of Primary School quality awards for careers education:**
  - The Board welcomed the news that three Awarding Bodies were preparing for endorsement of their primary school careers education awards from the Quality in Careers Standard Consortium in early 2026.
  - The Board encouraged collaboration with the CEC’s work on Primary careers education and the alignment of language and purpose.
  - **The Board approved the Consortium’s objective to work with the DfE and the Awarding Bodies to seek to agree a National Standard for Primary school careers education in due course.**
  - Ryan Gibson identified that MATs would be particularly interested in a National Standard because both primary and secondary schools in a Trust would be able undertake the award as a group rather than as individual schools. He was also keen to see synergy between all systems (Careers Impact Maturity Models and the Quality in Careers Standard).

## **ii. Progress on work with Independent Training Providers to engage with the Quality in Careers Standard**

- The Board was pleased to see collaboration between Erica, the ITP Learning Curve and their chosen Awarding Body to learn and reflect on how best to support ITPs through the process of achieving the Quality in Careers Standard. If Learning Curve could achieve the Standard, it would offer encouragement for others to become involved.
- The Board approved of the involvement of AELP and for the Director to invite them to consider nominating a representative to serve on the Consortium Board.

## **16/25 REPORT ON FINANCIAL MATTERS: FOR DECISION**

- i. The Board received the 2024-25 Accounts from the CDI.
- ii. In the ensuing discussion on cashflow, the Board noted that 238 schools/colleges were currently working towards the Standard which would give a potential revenue through the £50 accreditation levy of £11,900. This, plus the income already raised from the accreditation levy, validated the Board's decision to introduce this element of the overall Licensing fee rather than raising the 3 year Panel Fee higher. The Board noted that all fees would be reviewed at the Board meeting in March 2027.
- iii. Erica reported that an effective working relationship had been established between the Consortium and the CDI accounts service. Any 'lost' invoices could now be quickly retrieved and transferred to the Quality in Careers Account.

## **The Board formally approved the accounts for 2024-25**

## **17/25 REVIEW OF KEY DECISIONS TAKEN**

## **The Board reviewed the key decision taken as now recorded in these public notes.**

## **18/25 NEXT MEETING**

Paul drew the meeting to a close by thanking the Board members for their attendance and contributions. He also thanked them for their attendance at Relicensing Panels throughout the year and looked forward to Claire Green and Natalie Highfield being able to serve on a Panel in the future. He thanked Deepa Jethwa for her offer to secure case studies for the website and thanked both Claire Green and Natalie Highfield who offered to put Erica in touch with their organisations' events teams.

The Board confirmed that the next meeting would be scheduled for **12.30 – 2.30 on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 via Teams.**

*Notes prepared by Erica Rowell,*

*Quality in Careers Director 20/11/25 confirmed 15.12.25*