NHS Digital Academy Steering Group – Terms of Reference (TOR)

Version: June 2021

This document sets out the terms of reference for the NHS Digital Academy Steering Group

Background

The NHS Digital Academy was established following the Wachter Review (2016), which recognised a lack of clinical and non-clinical informatics professionals (particularly CIO & CCIO level) to deliver transformational change, and a subsequent Secretary of State commitment. In March 2021, a future vision was launched and is underpinned by the following principles:

- We will have a suite of learning that is **branded**, **reusable**, **accredited**, **curated** and **evaluated**
- We will include programmes and learning to support change leaders in the **earlier stages of their career** and supporting local needs
- We will ensure **increased, easy, open access** to Digital Academy learning materials
- We will embed a **transparent and inclusive recruitment** process for programmes with emphasis on reaching underrepresented groups
- We will work with stakeholders to develop **demand-led specialist learning** tailored to specific needs
- We will create a supportive learning culture with signposting to appropriate opportunities **based on individual need**

Delivery of the NHS Digital Academy workstream currently consists of the following four areas:

1. Overall picture and build
2. Digital Health Leadership Programme
3. Digital Academy Online Service
4. Developing Digital Leaders

The Digital Health Leadership Programme remains the flagship programme. It is a 12-month part-time learning programme *Post Graduate Diploma in Digital Health Leadership*. The programme is targeted at those who are operating within a context and are in a role where they are required to drive and implement practical digital transformation change within their organisation or system. This programme is currently delivered through a partnership with Imperial College London, HDRUK and the University of Edinburgh following a competitive procurement process in 20/21.

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Purpose

The NHS Digital Academy Steering Group exists to advise on the short, medium and long-term direction for the NHS Digital Academy from the perspective of users, employers and the profession. This advice will be used to ensure the Academy offers a service that is relevant, needed, fair, valued and value for money.

Functions

The Steering Group will undertake its purpose by:

- Setting a stretching but realistic ambition for the NHS Digital Academy (now and for the future), including inclusivity and reach/audience for the learning it provides.
- Owning the logic model that describes the theory of change associated with the Digital Academy, i.e. ensuring the work that enables the Academy to reach the goals set up are credible and best describes the steering group's expectations (see Appendix A for updated draft logic model).
- Providing advice on strategic and operational issues from the perspective of the commissioning body/programme (e.g. escalation point for issues).
- Requesting additional research to be commissioned or information to be requisitioned to enable the best possible advice to be given.
- Using member's wider roles/responsibilities to champion the Digital Academy (and Digital Readiness programme more broadly) and feeding back any useful information to the group.
- Reviewing draft documentation and providing expertise including project briefs, vision development and specifications ahead of procurements.
- Ensuring advice around other project activities is provided, e.g., communications, advertising and key partnerships etc.
- Advising on (likely broad) content areas for the learning where required.
- Championing the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda to ensure those benefiting from the Digital Academy is representative of the population.
- Ensuring the Academy is increasingly:
  - Relevant, needed and valued – is it providing the right services for participants, employers, the system and the profession?
  - Fair – is it doing so in an equitable manner with regard to protected characteristics and professional background?
  - Value for money – how can a better service be provided more cheaply?

Exclusions

While the workstream lead will provide oversight on key projects and activities through a delivery report, the Steering Group is not a performance management group (the Digital Readiness Programme Board takes that role). The workstream highlight report will however ensure members of the Steering Group can make informed suggestions of how performance could be improved.

Members of the Steering Group are not required to undertake work (e.g. produce documents), although it will be asked to review key documentation.

Members of the Steering Group are not responsible for selecting delegates for the learning provided unless they are part of the recruitment panel and are participating in the open and transparent process. All members can however advise on areas such as spread and inclusivity to ensure that the learning will bring real value.

The Steering Group does not have the authority to sign off spend. This is undertaken via the Digital Readiness Operational Delivery Group and Programme Board governance. It should however provide steer and advice on whether activity proposed offers value for money.

Accountability

The Digital Academy Steering Group sits within the Health Education England Digital Readiness programme governance. The area of work has an allocated workstream lead who reports to the Head of Digital Readiness. All Digital Readiness workstreams formally report into the Digital Readiness Programme Board.

The Digital Readiness Operational Delivery Group exists to approve spend (within a certain threshold, beyond 50K will need approval at the Programme Board) alongside ensuring projects are aligned across the Digital Readiness workstreams.

From 2021, Digital Academy Steering Group members will have the opportunity to join task and finish groups focusing on particular areas alongside wider stakeholders. These task and finish groups will be given delegated responsibility to deliver outcomes against specific areas, enabling the steering group meetings to focus on overall progress made in between meetings, outcomes and strategic direction. Items may also be taken to FedIP committees where appropriate, for example the Professional Development and Education Committee.
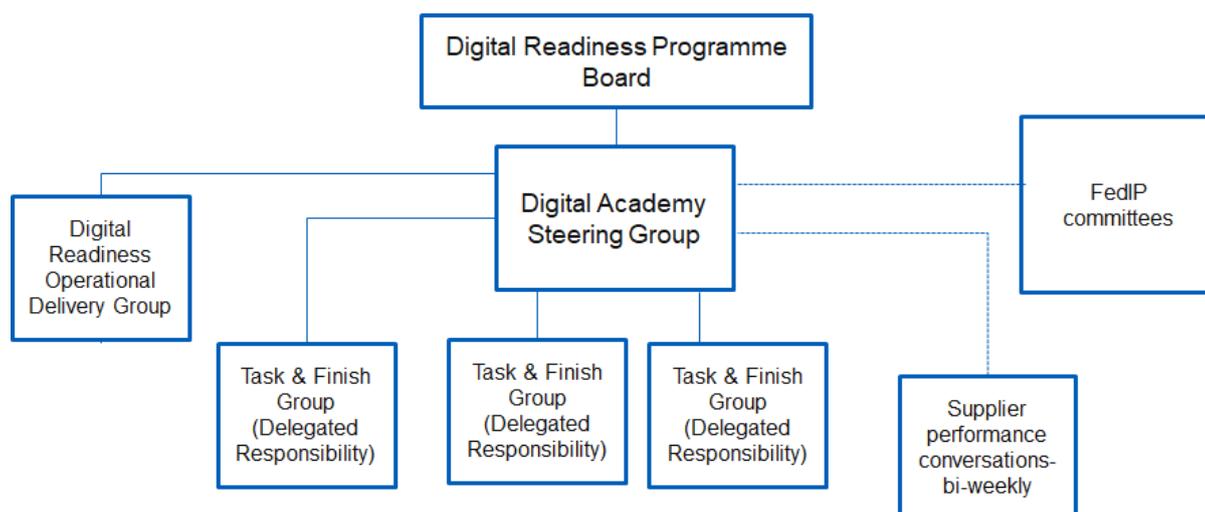
This diagram presents the governance arrangements for the Digital Academy Steering Group.

Conflicts of Interest

Members of the Digital Academy Steering Group are asked to highlight (to the secretariat), at any given point, where they become aware of any potential conflict of interest. This may be for example where they have ties to an organisation who is bidding for delivery work in this area. Members may subsequently be

asked to temporarily leave a meeting, for example, if sensitive commercial issues related to this potential conflict are discussed.

Frequency and Location of Meetings

Meetings shall be held quarterly (this frequency could change as and when delivery requires). Meetings will generally be held virtually. This is more cost effective to the NHS, will enable easier attendance, and will also allow all individuals attending the meeting to be present in an equal way. Once larger meetings in person are permitted, there may be merit in bringing the group together on occasion.

Each meeting will have secretariat present to enable brief notes, actions and decisions to be recorded and distributed. Papers will be circulated at least 5 days prior to the steering group and minutes circulated no more than 5 days afterwards. Agreed actions will be logged and tracked. In the interest of prompt progress, members may be asked to provide input virtually (via email) in between meetings.

Membership

Membership of the NHS Digital Academy Steering Group includes the following:

- Users – current and potential future users will help to ensure the future NHS Digital Academy is valued, relevant and needed. The group should include multiple users at different stages of their career and across different professional groups to ensure representation.

- Employers – to make sure the needs of employers are taken into account. This should also include CIOs/CCIOs and other senior managers from different NHS sectors who will be wanting to encourage staff within their teams to complete NHS Digital Academy programmes.

- Professional bodies (via FEDIP) – to ensure the Academy aligns with relevant professional bodies (e.g. accreditation of learning).

- Informatics academic experts – to represent the academic horizon scanning elements.

The current membership list can be found in Appendix B. Project Managers and other workstream leads may be invited to attend dependent on specific agenda items or where a significant update is required.

Suppliers

We expect to ask Suppliers (e.g., Imperial for the current contract) to attend specific parts of the meeting (only) to provide progress and discuss risks and issues around contracted delivery.

Quorate

Minimum representation shall be the Chair (or a nominated deputy) and at minimum four other permanent members representing each of the four groups in the section below. All efforts will be made to ensure that, where a member is unable to attend, their views are incorporated into meetings. Members should feel free to suggest a deputy should they be able to attend and where they see the deputy can still bring value in their place.

Where a supplier cannot attend a meeting, but an update has been provided to the Digital Academy workstream lead, this will be deemed as sufficient. This would however be the exception rather than the norm.

Standing Agenda

The meeting agenda will include the following standard items:

- Welcome, introductions and requests for AOB
- Supplier delivery updates
- Review of minutes and previous actions
- Workstream delivery report

Appendix A: Logic Model

The working logic model can be viewed on the NHS Digital Academy website.

Updates will be made to the logic model as it continues to be developed.

Appendix B: Current Membership

The membership of this group is currently under development, current members are listed below.

Role	Member
Digital Readiness Programme SRO or Deputy SRO (HEE)	Patrick Mitchell (Chair) / James Freed
HEE Non-Exec Director	Harpreet Sood
Head of Digital Readiness (HEE)	David Farrell
Digital Learning & Development Workstream lead (HEE) Project leads on invite	Henrietta Bankas
NHSx representation (as commissioner)	TBC NHSx Director of Workforce
NHS Digital representation	TBC (Caron Swinscoe, Jo Dickson or Raj Kumar)
NHS Leadership Academy representation	To be invited
ISDN representation	To be invited
Provider representation (ensuring a balance of acute, community, ambulance, mental health, ICS)	Afzal Chaudry Doug Stewart Gap – Ambulance service Gap - ICS Gap – Primary Care
Nursing & Midwifery representation (additional under-represented professional groups may follow)	TBC – currently Sara Nelson / Jo Dickson
Academic representative	Philip Scot

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FEDIP and Professional Bodies Other Professional Body reps may be invited and/or deputise as required	Andrew Griffiths John Williams
Digital Health Leadership Programme Delivery Partner	Alisdair Smithies / Rachel Dunscombe
NHS Digital Academy Alumni Rep	Mo Murhaba (there are additional alumni members in the steering group)
Developing Digital Leader representative	To be invited
Topol Fellowship Programme Manager	Louise Booth