

Worshipful Company of Educators

Education Committee

Discussion Evening

15 May 2018

'The City and Guilds Group – 140 Years On and Purposefully making a Difference'

Michel Osbaldeston (Special adviser & Skills Ambassador) and Sally Eley (Director of Corporate Relations)

The evening was opened by the Master, Susan Fey, who welcomed Masters and Wardens from other Livery Companies, Educators and guests. She described her career journey from working in secondary schools to holding senior positions in further education and her connection with City & Guilds culminating in her election as a Fellow of the City & Guilds Institute. Professional and technical education was the focus for her year as Master and formed the theme of the Company's Franklin Debate series. Several hundred people, mainly practitioners, had booked for the debates which illustrated the high level of interest in the current reforms of the sector. City & Guilds was 140 years old in 2018 and for the whole of that time had been a major player in further education.

Michael Osbaldeston and Sally Eley briefly charted the huge changes since City & Guilds was founded in 1878 and explained that the current purpose was 'to help people, organisations and economies develop their skills for growth'. Livery Companies, some 16 in number, were fundamental in establishing the City & Guilds Institute following the Great Exhibition. City & Guilds was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria in 1900, one of the last she granted. Some key achievements of City & Guilds were the establishment in 1887 of the Cordwainers' College to promote the leather trades, setting up Finsbury Technical College which eventually became City, University of London, creating the City & Guilds of London School of Art and involvement with the Royal School of Mines and the Royal College of Science to create Imperial College. While heritage was important it was recognised that City & Guilds could not survive on that. Skills were key to City & Guilds' purpose and it was now a global enterprise working in 80 countries. City & Guilds had promoted high levels of training, had set up the Associated Examined Board (AEB), initiated BTEC and contributed to the development of AQA, the current examinations body.

More recently the trustees decided to diversify and grow the business in three clusters of activity:

- Skills credentialing
- Corporate learning
- Technical training

Within skills credentialing City & Guilds involves vocational assessment and accreditation working with every FE college in the UK; ILM (the Institute of Leadership and Management) assesses and accredits leadership and management awards taken by 95,000 managers each year; Digitalme offers a digital means of credentialing an individual's achievements and skills – a digital 'certificate' which contains a significant level of detail.

Within the corporate learning strand Kineo provides elearning platforms for corporates and The Oxford Group offers leadership development training and executive coaching. Both of these organisations operate worldwide.

The third cluster, technical training, is, in some sense, a return to the roots of City & Guilds. Gen2 was founded in 2000 in Cumbria and is the largest trainer for the UK civil nuclear industry. It meets the need for skilled practitioners, who are in short supply, and also encourages young people to consider STEM careers.

These income-generating activities are key to amplifying the City & Guilds Group's wider purpose. Particular programmes are 'helping people into a job, develop on the job and onto the next job'. There are three purpose-led programmes:

- Social investment and sustainability
- Awards and recognition
- Advocacy

The programmes are described as 'driving greater impact for more people'.

The social investment and sustainability theme involves awarding bursaries (the Educators have been involved here) and a £5 million skills development fund for social projects that help create long term and sustainable change to improve skills and help young people to become economically independent. An example was given of one group that has been helped by the fund, AfriKids. A grant enabled women to access midwifery and nursing courses and an initial group of 45 women grew to 105 thus improving the life chances of mothers and babies. It has been estimated that these women will treat over 120,000 women over the course of a working lifetime. The efficacy of the project has been confirmed by independent research conducted by Cranfield University. A further example of the work of the fund is the St Giles' Trust where a grant of £100,000 enabled 30 ex-offenders to train as peer advisers working with serving prisoners to help them on release. It has been estimated that this work has saved the economy £6.5 million as the released prisoners have not re-offended and returned to prison.

City & Guilds has a well-developed system of awards and recognition which includes the Prince Philip Medal, Fellowships awarded to people eminent in their field, Livery prizes and medals of excellence for students and teachers. A new series of awards, the Princess Royal Training Awards, is given to employers who have demonstrated sustained and outstanding training and development opportunities for their employees. To qualify for the award employers must meet specific standards and demonstrate impact on their people. An example of an award winner is the East of England Co-operative Society which set up dementia awareness training for staff so that they could provide a better service to customers. Recipients of the Princess Royal Training Award are encouraged to share and promote the good practice they exemplify.

The advocacy strand is concerned with communicating about skills and their contribution to the economy. An important example is Apprentices Connect which was set up at the request of City & Guilds' own apprentices. By training apprentices from other organisations as well, they act as ambassadors by visiting schools and colleges to explain about apprenticeships and more generally what young people can hope to achieve. The scheme emphasises the importance of peer-to-peer communication.

Michael and Sally concluded their survey of the work of the City & Guilds Group by demonstrating the impact in numbers of the group's work, for example that 47,000 young people were reached during the last year through Apprentice Connect and that since 2000 some 30 million certificates had been awarded by the City & Guilds Group. This year City & Guilds is celebrating 140 years of helping people to achieve with an extensive programme of events and celebrations.

Michael and Sally then invited comments and questions from the audience. One of the Educators present commented that they had not realised the scope of the work of the City & Guilds Group and was particularly interested in the work that encouraged an understanding of the City & Guilds apprenticeships in schools. There were opportunities for partnership working by City & Guilds through Livery Schools Link and the annual Livery Showcase.

In response to a question about the financial stability of the City & Guilds Group Sally and Michael explained that all the income for the group was derived from the services that they had described and that all that income was either recycled into the clusters or to the organisation as a whole. They emphasised that the core purpose of the group is centred on skills, which was the origin of City & Guilds, but that the organisation had to be flexible to meet the changing needs of society.

Another member of the audience asked about the City & Guilds professional recognition awards which he considered to be important as a form of independent kitemarking identified by post-nominals. He was assured that these would continue as part of the group's developing scene.

There were some questions about City & Guilds support for employers. The support mechanisms for apprenticeship providers, described earlier in the presentation, provided an opportunity for City & Guilds to contribute to the infrastructure of respective industries. The group did not focus solely on larger employers, for example there was great potential for learning platforms to be very effective for supporting micro businesses, such as heritage crafts, as they faced up to future challenges. In this way government policy aimed at large-scale industries and organisations could be made applicable to micro and small enterprises.

The role of the Livery Companies was emphasised in the City & Guilds bursary scheme where 50% funding from the companies was matched by the group. Wherever appropriate applicants are matched to particular Livery Companies, for example the Educators' bursary is awarded to someone wishing to teach, thus underlining the link between the organisation and the companies. The New Ventures Fund seeks to support enterprises who support the aims of City & Guilds. Cranfield University is assessing the impact of the fund and the difference it is making.

City & Guilds recognises that it is very important to engage with young people and this is vital to its mission but equally it was essential to engage with teachers.

The speakers were asked about the international role of City & Guilds and they told the audience that there is a City & Guilds presence in some 80 countries worldwide and they gave examples of projects in various countries, for example an online learning platform has been developed in India. However, many countries were developing their own qualification systems and no longer wished to rely on an imported system. This meant that City & Guilds was exploring and developing new markets such as online learning.

One questioner wanted to know if City & Guilds Group was involved in policy making. Michael and Sally responded by noting that this tended to be governed by those who were in senior positions in the Department for Education as well as other governmental departments. At the moment there was a heavy concentration on Brexit issues across Whitehall. They gave examples of peers who were Fellows of City & Guilds Institute who contributed in debates on issues affecting the organisation and the wider skills world. Most of the policy work is carried out behind the scenes.

In response to another question it was confirmed that the City & Guilds of London Institute (CGLI) is a charity and is governed by its Royal Charter and trustees. There is a CGLI Council which acts in an

advisory capacity and has 80 members. The CGLI owns the group and its companies and is the holding company responsible for the brands.

Another audience member asked whether there should be an alumni network for the Fellows and it was acknowledged that it had been realised that the Fellows represented an underused resource. Work was in progress to address this issue and to identify what can be expected of the Fellows.

There was a question about whether schools featured in the strategy of City & Guilds. The Apprentice Connect venture (suggested by apprentices themselves) is reaching out to schools and colleges with apprentices visiting to tell young people about the challenges and rewards of apprenticeships: the financial argument for those considering next steps in their education or training is very much to the fore currently.

In thanking Michael and Sally for their most interesting and engaging presentation, Martyn Coles (Middle Warden) echoed the thoughts of many when he noted the scope and range of the City & Guilds Group's activities. While City & Guilds had a strong foundation in the City and a distinguished history reaching back to its 19th century foundation, the organisation had demonstrated that it was fully committed to embracing the future worldwide.