

## **NOS Governance Group – 2020-21 Quarter 3 Update (Dec 2020)**

### **NOS Strategy**

In our previous update we advised that the consultants Pye Tait had been commissioned to work with the NOS Governance Group (NOS GG) and key stakeholders across the UK to develop the new NOS Strategy. Building upon findings from the Edge Foundation survey report, Pye Tait facilitated a series of workshops throughout the autumn to gather comments from stakeholders on a range of topics including changes in the skills landscape, the primary purposes and users of NOS, the development process, the detail of the products, and general awareness of the system. Valuable feedback received has helped to shape the rationale, objectives and structure of the new strategy.

The NOS GG has since updated its vision and mission statement and the key themes for the next NOS Strategy have now been drafted. Senior officials and Ministers in each of the three Devolved Administrations will consider the high level principles being proposed within the new strategy; it is hoped that these will be approved notionally by the end of 2020. Further work will be carried out by Pye Tait before the end of the financial year to flesh out the strategy document itself, and to develop the accompanying visuals, recommendations, a transition plan and future engagement proposals.

We will hopefully be in a position to publish all finished strategy documents on-line, including the Edge Foundation stakeholder perceptions report, and share links to these within our next quarterly update.

### **Mid-year review of public spending on NOS**

At a meeting between the NOS GG and SDS during October, it was agreed that for the second half of the financial year, any residual grant in aid funding should be focussed on making continuous improvements to the NOS system. During the latter part of 2020/21 our attention will be directed towards a number of activities that will support the ambitions of the new NOS Strategy, this will include ongoing cleansing and development of the NOS database and continuation of the work to align NOS products to the new SOC2020 architecture.

Obtaining, triangulating and utilising robust LMI has always been crucial to underpinning the NOS system, therefore, in the short to medium term, we propose to commission a small LMI study. The main focus will be on the impact that Covid19 has had upon the usage of NOS, adaptations that have been made to the development process for NOS, as well as how the pandemic has driven changes in working practices and priorities for NOS products both next year and beyond.

### **NOS Priorities for 2021-22**

Annually during the autumn/winter, evidence gathering takes place for the identification of need for the following year's NOS product demand statement. Suppliers have already been helping us to understand changes that have taken place and are on the horizon across a range of sectors. Numerous sources of

information and data on occupational trends have been taken into account, and we aim to hold a three-nation commissioning meeting in the New Year, to agree NOS product priorities for 2021-22. In the spring we will alert those on the Supplier Framework Agreement that lots will be advertised. We intend to issue contracts at the beginning of the new financial year.

### **3rd Sector NOS case studies**

Some years ago the Welsh Govt commissioned a catalogue of NOS case studies; although noted as being under-represented, some anecdotal evidence was received on the use of NOS within the third sector in Wales. Recently the Welsh Govt commissioned another small piece of work to gain a better understanding of the use and impact of NOS in the third sector.

Feedback indicated a good range of uses including for HR business purposes; feedback also showed usage of NOS by a wide range of personnel including trustees, directors, team leaders, etc. Additionally, suggestions for changes and improvements were received. In conclusion, NOS were noted as having a positive impact on the third sector in Wales in most cases, but more could be done to raise awareness of NOS and their purpose, utilising experienced users to lead sessions, webinars and workshops.

A small number of case studies arising from this recent research will be published on the NOS website in due course.

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