



CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

REVIEW 2011 12

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Introduction

I'm delighted to introduce the CSR Review for 2011–12. At SQA, we take our Corporate Social Responsibilities seriously and we strive to 'Give Something Back' to our communities and staff in a variety of ways. Seeing all of these activities in one document like this helps us to see the many ways in which we've successfully given something back over the past year and highlights the charitable, good-hearted qualities that we as a workforce possess.



Above, Volunteering at St Mary's Primary School

One way that we've been able to reach out to the community is through our volunteering scheme, which we launched in February 2011. Since then, over 135 colleagues have participated in one or more of our volunteering activities. From planting trees and painting classrooms, to conducting mock interviews or paired reading sessions, these activities have required enthusiasm and commitment. I thank all SQA's volunteering staff members for their passion and dedication to this, and for finding time among their busy

work schedules to represent SQA in the community.

It is not only in the volunteering capacity that staff members have helped us to Give Something Back — as this review demonstrates, we have been able to help communities both at home and overseas thanks to their commitment to Fair-trade, fundraising and anti-racism to name a few.

The charity committees in both sites have raised a total of over £10,700 for their

chosen charities since June 2011. I think we should applaud ourselves for such a tremendous achievement. I see this annual review as an opportunity to celebrate these positive and meaningful successes for SQA.

I feel very proud to lead an organisation that is so driven to act responsibly to Give Something Back to its community. Thanks to your efforts, we now stand in a position where other businesses from both the Public and Private Sector are looking to us as the example to follow!

I'd like to also thank the partners and businesses that we've worked with in all of our *Giving Something Back* activities. Not only have we used our own knowledge, time and expertise to help these organisations, but, in return, they have given us a valuable experience and helped us to develop our skills or gain new ones which, in turn, has benefitted our business.

Congratulations everyone, and keep up the good work!

Janet Brown, Chief Executive

How CSR works at SQA

Our Giving Something Back strategy uses a 'four pillar' model. This helps us to integrate and embed our social conscience across our business operations.

The four pillars are our:

- Community
- People
- Environment
- Customers, Products & Suppliers

Governance and control are important. To ensure the effective deployment, monitoring and evaluation of our strategy, we have engaged with key people across SQA to support the roll-out and achievement of activities.



Maidie Cahill,
Director of Corporate Services, is responsible for overseeing the Corporate Social Responsibility Steering Group.



Four senior members are responsible for the strategic direction and management of each corporate social responsibility pillar:



NEIL MACGOWAN
HEAD OF OPERATIONS

Responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of all corporate social responsibility activities and is responsible for the Community pillar.



HELEN DUNHAM
HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Responsible for the People pillar



SIMON PARSONS
FACILITIES MANAGER

Responsible for the Environment pillar



ALASDAIR MACRAE
HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Responsible for the Customers, Products and Suppliers pillar

Working in partnership



Giving Something Back Champions

Our Giving Something Back Champions work across SQA to engage staff and promote our activities. Much of our progress over the past year has been achieved due to the commitment, passion and hard work of our Champions.

I have been a CSR Champion since volunteering launched in 2011 and have enjoyed the diversity of the role. I have been involved in a range of activities which has given me the chance to use skills that I would not normally use in my current job.

I thoroughly enjoy the role and it gets me involved with people, internal and external to SQA, that I would not come across in my day to day role. The range of projects that I am involved in can be challenging, however very rewarding.

Tracy Walker, GSB Champion

SQA AND SBC

Scottish Business in the Community (SBC) recognises SQA's ongoing commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and continues to work in partnership on a range of community-based activities.



Bob Christie,
Programme
Manager,
Scottish
Business in the
Community

Left, Bob Christie Presents award to Alexander Warren, Carnegie College along with Rob Gibson, SQA Director of Business Systems at Scotland 2050 Awards Presentation

SBC staff have worked closely with the staff of SQA on activities designed to enhance the employability skills of young people across the country. In addition to supporting a number of SBC organised events, SQA staff have continued to develop their support for pupils at Hillpark Secondary School, Glasgow and Newbattle Community High School, Dalkeith.

This year SQA and SBC jointly launched the Employability Toolkit designed to encourage other businesses to get involved in supporting elements of the curriculum and supported and managed the successful Scotland 2050 competition.

SQA as an organisation takes an active role in SBC's Glasgow Leadership Group and SQA staff volunteers support SBC's programmes enhancing the employability skills of young people across Glasgow and Midlothian.

SQA AND HAVEN TRAINING

To assist with the relocation to our new office in Dalkeith we worked with young people looking to improve their employability skills from Haven Training to support our Facilities Team. This was a great experience for them as some of them had never had work experience and it allowed them to gain skills which would hopefully help lead to full time employment. It was also a great experience for SQA. Haven Training were very grateful for the opportunity to work with us.



Left, SQA Lowden

We worked with SQA during their move to their new purpose built offices in Dalkeith during December 2011.

Haven and our Complimentary Work force Model were engaged to carry out the tasks as required by SQA's Facilities Team.

During this time, they've added real value to the work experience of the Haven Associates, and our business by helping us meet our service levels during our time on the project.

SQA worked closely with us to help us to understand our environment and the type

of work they did so that we could get the right people with the appropriate skills.

In addition to this, it has also helped us to increase the engagement of our people through the Haven 'buddy system'.

All of our Associates gained in confidence through this project and have gone on to further employment — one in particular to start his own landscaping and wall repair business as a direct result.

SQA and their staff have shown great commitment, enthusiasm and hard work and this has resulted in a win-win position for both of us.

Tom Henderson, Business Development Manager, Haven

Haven
Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

Community

We strive to be a public body that truly *Gives Something Back* to our local communities and the work undertaken in 2011/12 has helped set us on our way to achieving this aim. From charity fundraising to engaging young people and improving their employability skills, the breadth of work undertaken is inspirational, and you can read about some of it here.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Employability Toolkit launched to all businesses in Glasgow as a support resource
- One to one reading and number partnering support with Primary 1 – 4 pupils
- Supporting young adults with the transition from school to work/further education
- Student Mentoring programme
- Outdoor activities with schools and community centres
- Creative competitions for young people and students ranging from nursery to college

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

We are now in our second year of our staff volunteering 'Hands up' scheme, which is growing rapidly. All our colleagues have 21 hours a year to devote to volunteering in our local communities. We support volunteering activities linked to our corporate values in the following areas:

- Young people and social inclusion
- Enterprise and employability

- Environment and sustainability
- Human health and wellbeing

Led by our Giving Something Back Champions, our volunteering scheme has been hugely successful.

135 staff members have registered to undertake voluntary work. Since February

2011 our staff devoted 632.5 hours to supporting our local communities through a range of practical support activities.

We are very conscious that supporting volunteering opportunities brings advantages to SQA, our staff, and the people and organisations being supported. As well as acting as ambassadors for SQA, our staff volunteers are learning new skills which they bring back into our business.

Here are some examples of the work they have done.

EMPLOYABILITY TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE

We took a significant lead in the 'Glasgow's Future' initiative by developing an 'Employability Toolkit' to support young people with the transition from school to work. This work has evolved greatly over the past year and has led to SQA and Hillpark Secondary School in Glasgow and Newbattle Community High School in Midlothian developing a strong working relationship which will continue to grow.

We launched the toolkit at the Glasgow's Future event in the City Chambers, hosted by Scottish Business in the Community (SBC), where Glasgow businesses came together to support companies helping to build the skills of young people.

The toolkit allows other organisations to follow our example and help them establish links with their own local schools where they can impart their own specialist knowledge and help young people into work. Other organisations have sought our advice and support with implementing their own toolkits, and we have willingly given support.

Hillpark Secondary has worked with the SQA for the past two years in which they have formed a very effective partnership which has benefitted both staff and pupils.

Our pupils are proud to be part of a very useful resource connecting the skills learned in school with working life which can be used by schools throughout the country.

We are continuing to develop our links with the SQA with individual pupils who are given the opportunity to work directly with SQA staff on projects. The SQA also welcomed some of our pupils to visit their offices for valuable work experience. When they returned they were very enthusiastic and inspired as they were given the opportunity to apply the administrative skills learned in school to the office environment.

The school is also very grateful for the time and efforts given by SQA staff to our pupils to develop interview skills which can help raise their self-esteem and equip them with the skills necessary for future life.

Pauline Cairns, Principal Teacher of Business and Administration



Above, Employability Toolkit launch event, featuring guest speaker Pauline Cairns from Hillpark Secondary School

HILLPARK SECONDARY SCHOOL – WORK EXPERIENCE

I thoroughly enjoyed my day working in the SQA offices and feel that I learned a lot about taking down notes for minutes and working on Reception. I'd like to thank Tracy for guiding me and I feel more confident now about working in the real world – I'm excited now about getting a job!

Louiseanna Campbell, pupil

I loved working with the SQA staff in their offices and really appreciated the help from my mentor. My day at the SQA enabled me to use my administration skills in real life. I feel more confident now about my future as working for an organisation doesn't seem so scary.

Heather Malcolm, pupil

ANNETTE STREET PRIMARY

A dedicated group of staff volunteers visit Annette Street Primary School in Glasgow on a weekly basis to provide number partner support to pupils.

PARTNERS IN BUSINESS MENTORING SCHEME SHAWLANDS ACADEMY

Working in partnership with Career Academies UK, we have a number of staff taking part in their Partners in Business programme, providing students with one-to-one support with coursework and life skills.

It is a long term commitment (18 months), but from my perspective seems to allow me to 'Give Something Back' in quite an individual way to a worthy cause.

Bill Pearson, mentor

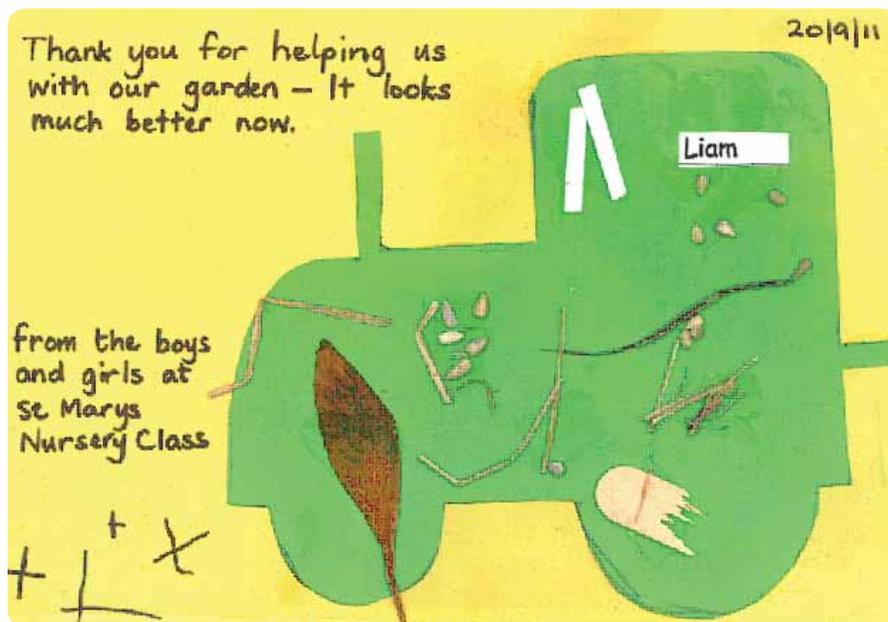
ANNIESLAND COLLEGE

I'm really enjoying the mentoring experience and I'm learning things I didn't think I would learn. I expected to be able to make a huge difference to my student but actually the challenge has been in letting him drive the relationship, ask me for what he needs and not be too directive, let him find his own answers.

I'm enjoying continuing to develop the relationship with my student and to start to see him progress. I think the best thing is just realising something that's nothing to you can be hugely significant to them. It's very rewarding and I'd definitely recommend!

Jillian Shields, Mentor

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BONNYRIGG



Above, Volunteers carried out work indoors and outdoors, including making a raised vegetable bed.

Above Left, Thank you note from St Mary's Primary School, Bonnyrigg

Thanks for the work which your teams have carried out in our nursery playground/garden, and for the painting work completed in the Home Link room, including all the time spent in preparation.

Both areas have had a wonderful facelift with the children enjoying their new seating and raised vegetable beds, and members of staff who use the Home Link room appreciating the fresh décor. We also look forward to springtime, when we will have an amazing display of spring flowers to admire.

Please thank all the members of your teams for us.

Liz Laird, Head Teacher,
St Mary's Primary School

HAWTHORNDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL – PAIRED READING PROGRAMME

We have volunteers who have been working with Primary 4 pupils on a paired reading programme. Our staff attend the school fortnightly to support the pupils with their reading skills. This has been very rewarding for our staff as they are contributing towards building the youngsters confidence. This programme has been hugely popular and will continue to run into 2012–13.

Brenda Allan, volunteer

With busy lives it can be hard to find time to volunteer. However, the benefits of volunteering are enormous.

I volunteered to take part in paired reading at a local primary school as I wanted to give something back to the community. This involved a weekly visit to the school for an hour working with two pupils on one to one tutoring. The children who have taken part have become more confident not only at reading but within themselves.

Personally I have found the experience hugely rewarding. The joy I receive at the enthusiasm the children now have towards reading compared to when I first encountered them is truly heart warming.

The key is always to let the children know you are interested in their success.

SUPPORTING CHARITIES

Each year our staff work very hard to raise money for charity. This year we raised money for two cancer charities —we have raised £4700 for the Marie Curie Cancer Centre in Edinburgh and £6000

for Beatson Oncology Unit at Gartnavel Hospital in Glasgow. This is a phenomenal amount of money that SQA staff have collected — in most instances in their own time. The money we have raised this

year, and in years gone by, show how all SQA staff members are passionate about helping people less fortunate than themselves.

Competitions & Open Days

SCOTLAND 2050

Scotland 2050 was an exciting national competition, run jointly by SQA and Scottish Business in the Community, which asked young people to develop a piece of creative or scientific work that demonstrated their vision of Scotland in 2050.

The competition was open to nurseries through to schools, colleges and training providers. Covering four main categories of Work, Transport and Travel, Education and Training and Life and Style, entrants were asked to submit a piece of creative or scientific work, inspired and stimulated by their thoughts on life in Scotland in 2050.

Creative entries included artwork, music, dance, poetry, creative writing, multimedia and design. Scientific entries included project outlines, and designs for products such as electric cars.

Three winners in each category were invited along to an exciting award ceremony at the Glasgow Science Centre in June.

You can see some photos from the competition here.

Pictured, *Winners from St Mark's RC Primary School, Carnegie College and Pitlochry High School*



SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

We are committed to promoting a fair and inclusive Scotland. This is the third year we have provided support to the annual creative competition for schools and colleges run by Show Racism the Red Card. Show Racism the Red Card is an anti-racism charity that produces educational resources such as films, education packs, magazines and posters. The aim of the campaign is to combat racism using professional footballers as anti-racism role models.

We provided support to promote the competition across Scotland's schools and colleges and delivered the prize-giving ceremony.

2012 saw nearly 2000 entries received from 118 centres. Schools from 27 local authorities in Scotland, and 14 further education colleges, participated. The most significant statistic is that 1,760 young Scots learned about anti-racism. Their powerful and emotive competition entries showed their overwhelming commitment to saying that racism has no place in Scotland.

Prizes were presented to finalists in six categories, but there was no overall winner this year as the judges felt it was inappropriate to select a winner from powerful and evocative entries spanning a wide age range.

The Awards Ceremony was held on 22 March 2012 at Hampden Park, Glasgow, and was hosted by TV personality Sanjeev Kholi. Over 250 guests, including a host of football stars from Scottish football clubs, were present to see the prizes handed out.

Below, Winners and Finalists from Edinburgh's Telford College, Star Primary School and Park Nursery, Giffnock



Top, Audience at Show Racism the Red Card

MIDLOTHIAN ART CHALLENGE



Following the Midlothian Art Challenge competition in 2011, which encouraged students and SQA staff to design a piece of art work inspired by the twenty five famous Scots whose names have been given to our new Shawfair meeting rooms, an Art Open Day was held on Saturday 17 March 2012 for the winners of the competition, their families and friends to see the art work in situ in the meeting

rooms and public spaces in our new Lowden office.

One of the artists, Kaitlin Morton, said 'I was really proud to see my work on display and I've very happy to hear the kind things people have said about my picture.'

Kaitlin is pictured here with Director of Operations, Karen McCallum.

Left, Kaitlin Morton & Karen McCallum



Above, Winners of Art Challenge from Midlothian Schools



CONTEMPORARY CHINA

The grand winners of our 2011 Inspiring Scotland Contemporary China Competition visited Scotland during November 2011 to experience Scottish traditions and culture. Chen Xianglang and Pinpin Lv visited the Scottish Parliament to meet Michael Russell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning and Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs. Both Ministers congratulated them on their success and were interested to learn their future career plans.

Chen and Pinpin attended the SQA Star Awards Ceremony to receive trophies marking their achievements. Chen's parents accompanied him on the visit to Scotland and were extremely emotional as he took the opportunity to thank them for the support they have given him to achieve his learning goals.

Our links with China were strengthened further with our 2012 Contemporary China competition. Universities across China offering our HND qualifications put forward exceptional students whose career aspirations were being supported by an SQA HND. The students were also high achievers in the study of English and had shown a sustained commitment to their local communities and families. Over 70 nominations were received, and Neil MacGowan, Head of Operations and Miss Haiying Yu, Depute Director at the Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange presented prizes to 16 finalists at the Awards Ceremony held on 26 June 2012 in Beijing.

The overall competition winner was Zonglin Song from Renmin University. A confident and beaming Zonglin told the assembled guests how proud he was to win the competition and how his HND qualification had provided a substantial bridge to the university degree he was about to begin in England.

SQA FAIRTRADE GROUP



SQA was elected to the Board of the Scottish Fair Trade Forum (SFTF), which is helping Scotland achieve Fair Trade Nation status by the end of 2012. Our representative on the Board is Graeme Clark.

Senior Pupils from St Andrews High School, Kirkcaldy came along to Lowden

and shared with a number of staff their passion for Fair Trade and the difference it has, and continues to make, to their quality of learning. They encouraged SQA to continue with its involvement in Fair Trade and see many opportunities for teachers and pupils in CFE for further promoting the principles of Fair Trade and the difference it can make to producers and consumers.

One of the more unexpected areas where Fair trade is making a difference to producers is in sports equipment. With the support for the Scottish Fair Trade Forum

(SFTF) SQA offered a limited number of Fair Trade Footballs to Schools and in total 15 schools (including one in Tanzania) received footballs which they are using to encourage not only their health and sports activity but also promote fair trade.

We supported the sale of Fair Trade Olive Oil from the Gaza to SQA staff.

We also supported the Malawian Kitchen 90kg challenge – buying 90kg of FT Malawian rice enables a farmer/producer to send one of their children to school. SQA staff purchased over 120kg.



Right, children at Carntyne Primary school in Glasgow with their FT footballs.



Pictured, Contemporary China winner Zonglin Song with Neil MacGowan, Head of Operations SQA and Miss Haiying Yu, Depute Director at the Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange



People

SQA is committed to developing a supportive, enjoyable and inclusive work environment. We are delighted to report on progress being made to support and engage staff through our CSR activities

HEALTH AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES



SQA's Make a Change Group (MAC) takes the lead in promoting health and lifestyle choices to all staff. MAC members are all volunteers who meet monthly to develop a range of creative and innovative health promotion activities and life style options.

SQA has held the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award since 2010, which recognises the achievements of our health promotion activities and our commitment to helping staff make effective lifestyle choices. As part of the Award, raising awareness of mental health issues is a key

criterion, and SQA's online Mental Health Awareness training was developed in response to recommendations from the MAC Group. We launched this training for line managers, but gave all staff the opportunity to take part.

MAC ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST YEAR

FEEL GOOD WEAR IT RED

In February we held 'Feel Good Wear it Red' week to promote healthy hearts and general wellbeing, which was very successful and saw staff taking part in a variety of healthy and fun activities including hula hooping, tai chi, massage and shiatsu along with lots of information on how to lead a healthy and happy lifestyle. We also had the North Glasgow Food Initiative and Edinburgh Community Food in to share info on cooking healthy, delicious meals.



Left, Kim Miller with her prize-winning 'Feel Good Wear it Red' cake, presented by June Buchanan of Glasgow Informal Committee

SATURDAY KITCHEN



A Saturday morning health event for SQA staff, their family and friends was held in July, to tie in with National Childhood Obesity week. The day saw healthy food samples and nutrition advice, kids Zumba sessions and lots of fun quizzes. Feedback from the day was very positive, with one parent exclaiming 'my children ate more healthy options than I expected!'

Below, Healthy activities and catering on offer at the Saturday Kitchen event, Optima.



STEP COUNT CHALLENGE



Above, Participants of SQA's Step Count Challenge

The end of May saw the culmination of our staff Step Count Ten Week Challenge, part of a corporate initiative to get everyone healthier.

Over 80 staff across Dalkeith and Glasgow took part in the initiative, which had a Commonwealth Games theme. The

steppers were challenged to walk from Delhi in India, the venue of the 2010 Games, to Glasgow, host of the 2014 Games. SQA staff amassed a total of 25,177 miles between them, which in real terms meant they travelled to Delhi and back again (to Scotland that is!) nearly three times, which was a great effort on everyone's part.

CLASSES AND THERAPIES

A host of classes are available over lunchtimes and after work for staff, including Zumba, a walking group, a jogging group, Pilates and a boot camp.

Lynne Malcolm,
staff member

'I joined the group to get fit and within weeks I was loving it – not only am I raising my fitness levels, I'm getting to know other people within the organisation so it has a social element too! I think it's a great initiative that SQA are promoting healthy living to staff. I think the benefits lead to a more productive workforce!'

All of our classes are paid for by participants.

The jogging group has proved particularly popular, and has now been running for nearly a year and in that time there have been many success stories — colleagues who joined as new runners are now running for 20 minutes and longer without

stopping. Many have entered organised running events and have achieved personal goals. One staff member in particular has gone from the walking group and is now running over 10 miles each session!



Above, SQA Jog Club members

LONG SERVICE AWARDS



Our success is built on the commitment and enthusiasm of our staff members, many of whom have given long and sustained service.

Our Long Service Awards were held in February at our Lowden office in Dalkeith, where Chief Executive Janet Brown paid tribute to 23 staff who had given a total of 475 years service between them.

WORK EXPERIENCE

The work experience programme for S4 pupils year has been running in SQA for a few years now. This year has seen 10 pupils coming to SQA for a week to experience how SQA operates and how different departments work together. This programme is supported by many areas of the business, with all Directorates taking part.

Many of the pupils leave having created a blog recording their experiences and their learning outcomes. Feedback from all of the pupils has been very positive and appreciative of the support given to them by all of the staff they have worked alongside.

EQUALITY TRAINING

As part of our commitment to Equality and Diversity we launched the online training module: Equality and Diversity Awareness Training for SQA Staff in 2011.

This course was designed to raise the awareness of the Equality Act (2010), SQA's responsibilities as an employer and its impact on SQA staff. The module was interactive and available for staff to complete at a time most suitable for them.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY WEEKS

SQA is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects difference. We believe that, as an employer and public body, we can play a leading part in the promotion of equality and diversity more widely.

In October 2011 and March 2012 we held Equality and Diversity weeks for our staff in Glasgow and Dalkeith. The aim was to raise awareness of the Equality Act 2010 and the implications of the legislation for staff, SQA as an employer and service provider.

A number of expert speakers kindly held a variety of seminars and presentations for staff.

This included input from Acas, Beattie Resources for Inclusive Technology in Education (BRITE), Communication Forum Scotland, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the National Autistic Society, see me Scotland, Show Racism the Red Card, the Scottish Inter Faith Council, the Scottish Sensory Centre at Edinburgh University, and Stonewall Scotland.

We greatly appreciate the support from each of the organisations who contributed thought-provoking presentations as part of our Equality Weeks. The events were well supported by staff, with over 90 Dalkeith-based staff and just over 100 Glasgow-based staff attending workshops. We have also been contacted by a number of other organisations that are keen to organise similar themed events.

The delegates who completed our feedback survey took the time to reflect on what they had learned and provided positive feedback. Of those who attended an event, 94% learned something new about equality and 78% felt they could apply this in their role.

Some of the comments we received from staff following the weeks included:

'It was very good and very informative, especially the Scottish Interfaith Council and see me Campaign session. Thank you for organising it.'

'I thought the sessions with people speaking about their real life experiences educate people about what life is like for them. I attended the see me talk and thought it was fantastic. As mental health is a more confusing condition (due to people not understanding enough about mental health and putting this down to behaviours rather than an illness) it might be helpful to roll out training on mental health for line managers and as a step up from the OD training, focused more on recognising signs of mental health, as a manager how to approach/support staff who you suspect may have mental health issues.'

'The sessions I attended were both interesting and useful - I would (and did!) recommend these to anyone.'



PATHWAY APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

Pathway is the name for the SQA Modern Apprenticeship scheme. Under the scheme, SQA has two young adults starting in our two year Modern Apprenticeship in Business and Administration, in August 2012. This year it was aimed at school leavers in the Midlothian area. This contributes towards our Corporate Social Responsibility policy of working with young people in our local communities.

Over the two years of their apprenticeship, the apprentices will attend Edinburgh College on a day release basis, to develop and reinforce the skills they are learning on the job. Our internal SVQ assessors will undertake the formal assessments required to achieve the SVQ level 3 qualification, in Business and Administration.

Each apprentice will have an SQA mentor who will support and guide them during their apprenticeship. The apprentices will be given the chance to develop expertise and knowledge in a range of our business departments as well as gaining vital skills such as team working and problem solving.

The scheme will begin in our Glasgow office next year, with two apprentices joining us in August 2013.

STONEWALL SCOTLAND



SQA has joined Stonewall Scotland's Diversity Champions programme which promotes and develops good practice for employers. The programme, run by the gay equality charity, promotes a good working environment for all existing and potential staff and helps to ensure equal treatment for those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

SQA joins employers as diverse as Barclays, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the University of Glasgow on the programme, which has over 600 major employer members.

We look forward to working with Stonewall in 2012–13 and beyond in the development of our equality and diversity commitments around sexual orientation.

Environment

It is pleasing to report that over the last 12 months our CO₂ output from direct activities has shown a reduction of 1,361 tonnes, a huge 28% reduction compared with 2010–11. Many activities during the last 12 months have contributed to this reduction — here are the main highlights.

The relocation of our Dalkeith office to a purpose-built facility has had a positive influence on our output. The building has an Energy Performance Certificate of a B rating, and achieved a BREAMM Excellent rating. Both of these have impacted on our projected consumption of gas and electricity. The technology in place to control the systems means a greater degree of control, which again directly affects our output.

For the relocation we have communicated a Green Travel Plan, which is encouraging staff and visitors to use public transport, and we provide information on this. We link in with Midlothian Council Public Transport Unit and receive regular updates on services, which are then communicated to staff.

A large amount of furniture from our old office was recycled by being offered to local charities, schools and community groups.

- Our vehicle fleet has been bolstered by the electric vehicle project in association with Jewel & Esk College. The vehicle has been provided for 12 months to carry out an evaluation of electric vehicles. The Mitsubishi i-Miev has been made available to SQA-approved drivers to use, the feedback collated is passed onto the project to help in the overall evaluation of the project.
- 15 additional staff have signed up for the interest-free bicycle loan. This brings the total to 47 since the scheme commenced.



- Ecotown, sponsored by Scottish Business in the Community, visited SQA for a very successful two days during March. The feedback from this event was positive, with a staff questionnaire reporting that attendees had improved their environmental knowledge.



- Smarter Driver Training, in conjunction with The Energy Saving Trust, was arranged for approved drivers. Participants commented that they would re-assess their driving techniques to save fuel in the future.
- New recycling centres at our new Dalkeith office has resulted in a reduction of 8% the amount of waste sent to landfill — less than 4% of our total waste is classed as landfill. We hope to introduce these centres to our Glasgow office.
- This year the SQA has produced its first ever Sustainability Report for the Scottish Government, covering the period 2011–12.
- The key aspect now is that we do not become complacent, as our five-year target was a 20% reduction. This target will be revised when we come to review our Carbon Management Plan that runs until 2013–14.

Above, Staff and guest speakers enjoy the Ecotown event

Customers, Products & Suppliers

For our customers, dealing with socially responsible companies is increasingly high on their agendas. Our products need not only be high quality, but also sustainable. As well as holding ourselves to high standards of sustainability, we strive to ensure all our suppliers work to the same rigorous standards.

This section gives you an overview of our progress so far.

VOLUNTEERING AWARDS

In 2011, we promoted our newly validated Volunteering Awards. The target audience for these awards is the large number of voluntary and other third sector organisations who use

volunteers to support their work, and as part of the campaign we asked voluntary organisations around the country to identify how SQA staff and customers can help to support their activities.

SUPPLY CHAIN

SQA is dedicated to ensuring the supply chain allows for fair and transparent engagement for all suppliers including SMEs and local businesses.

The procurement policies and procedures have been streamlined to allow for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and local businesses a simpler route to bid for SQA's contract opportunities.

Listed below are some of the changes that have been implemented to allow for supplier engagement:

- Policy allows for the use of quick quotes to SMEs and local businesses up to the value of £50,000
- Tender documentation reflects the value and complexity of the requirements and has been revised to reflect this
- Probity and financial checks are now in line with the contract value, size and risk
- Longer term contracts are now awarded to allow for best value in terms of delivery improvement and sustainability.
- All tender documentation outline the procurement stages with timelines to allow for planning by the supplier
- Named contacts are on all tender documentation
- Greater emphasis on environmental and sustainability criteria

SQA is committed to working with suppliers who have a strong ethical and social responsibility to their employees and within their own supply chain.

STAR AWARDS

Scottish education and training is full of inspirational stories and breath taking achievements from students and centres. Our annual Star Awards Ceremony recognises these amazing successes, triumphs and achievements.

At the 2011 ceremony, held at Anniesland College in November, 38 awards were presented in 16 categories for individual and centre achievements. Our highest accolade, the Pride o'Worth Awards, were presented by Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs. The Pride o'Worth Awards are the SQA's highest accolades and are selected from the evening's winners in both individual and centre categories. The Centre award was won by Langside College and the Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care, with the individual Pride o'Worth award going to John O'Hara from Coatbridge College.

Our premier award, the Fellowship of SQA, which goes to individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to education and training in Scotland, was presented to Jennifer di Folco, former Qualifications Manager at SQA and passionate supporter for art and showcasing the phenomenal creative talents in schools and colleges.

Below, Entertainment was provided by Coatbridge College and Pinpin LV, one of the Contemporary China competition winners



COMMONWEALTH GAMES LEGACY COMMITTEE

SQA continues to engage in Commonwealth Games activities. SQA is a member of the Legacy Committee and also serves on two sub-groups – the Skills Group and the Learning Group.

SQA is the official provider of the Personal Best award in Scotland. This award is a pre-volunteering qualification and is aimed at engaging hard-to-reach learners. In addition to this award, SQA has refreshed a number of qualifications in its portfolio that support Commonwealth Games aims and that are in line with the findings of the Skills Groups. These include:

- NPA Sporting Events: Personal Best at SCQF Level 4
- Organising Volunteering Events in Sport at SCQF Level 6
- SVQ in Spectator Safety Level 2
- NPA Stewarding at SCQF Level 5
- NQGA Awards in Volunteering at SCQF Level 3,4 & 5

SQA will continue to promote other relevant awards in its portfolio including Customer Service, Stewarding, Security, Hospitality, and Licensing awards.

SQA has also set up links and connections with relevant agencies and portals, for example SQA is signed up to the Commonwealth Games Business Portal and is directly linked to the City of Glasgow organising committee.

PARTNERSHIP ACTION FOR CONTINUING EMPLOYABILITY

We continue to work closely with Scottish Government and Skills Development Scotland in supporting the Partnership Action for Continuing Employability.

SCOTTISH BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Our Business Development & Customer Support team delivered a workshop to a group of SMEs in Dundee as part of a Scottish Business in the Community Event. We highlighted the range of qualifications available in Scotland and encouraged the employers present to consider offering work placements to school candidates as well as considering the opportunities available to their own staff.

CONCLUSION

Our corporate social responsibility activities have continued to grow and develop in 2011/ 12, and this review has highlighted many of the initiatives that we have implemented and delivered this past year. However we recognise that as a socially responsible company we have a duty to continue our journey in 2012/13, and strive to become an increasingly positive example in the area of CSR.

You can keep up to date on our CSR activities by visiting our website - www.sqa.org.uk/givingsomethingback or call our CSR Team on 0845 213 5289.



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