



## **SQA Corporate Plan 2016–19**

## Section 1: Strategic Intent

### Strategic context and drivers

SQA's future activities will be shaped by a number of broad strategic drivers that will have an impact on all nations and economies. These are:

- ◆ The need for skilled workforces, recognising that in all areas of the world, skills, training and qualifications remain engines for economic growth.
- ◆ Globalisation of industry, business, trade and education, leading to increased interdependence and interconnectedness of economies and nations.
- ◆ The need to develop knowledge societies to support sustainable economic growth.
- ◆ The need to improve the health and wellbeing of all people to ensure they have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
- ◆ Increased availability and application of technology in education and skills development.
- ◆ The recognition that all countries need to develop global citizens with appropriate skills, knowledge, ways of learning, and ways of doing business that enable them to live, work and study within a range of localities and international contexts.

SQA is a non-departmental public body and in this role it remains fully committed to working with other organisations, agencies and institutions in the Scottish family to help meet Scottish Government's National Outcomes, strategies, policies and priorities — both at home and abroad.

As such, there are some specific strategic drivers that steer SQA's public body responsibilities in Scotland and further afield during the period covered by this plan. These are:

- ◆ The Education (Scotland) Act 1996 and other relevant legislation.
- ◆ Embedding Curriculum for Excellence and the new National Qualifications that will support the senior phase in schools.
- ◆ Developing Scotland's Young Workforce youth employment strategy. This will drive activity across the education and skills system in Scotland, in particular in relation to providing more Scottish learners with vocational pathways.
- ◆ Pressures on public sector funding require that SQA maximises its income generation opportunities outwith Scotland.
- ◆ Transformation through technology.
- ◆ Scottish Government strategies and policies on economic growth, skills development, employment and employability. SQA will continue to work with government to support learners, employers, centres, and customers to meet the challenges of the current economic climate and prepare for future recovery.

- ◆ International engagement with regions, nations and governments identified in Scottish Government’s international engagement strategies and plans.
- ◆ Consideration of the changing political, economic and social environment.

These drivers demonstrate that the skills, training and qualifications landscape has never been more important and this affords SQA opportunities and challenges to provide products and services as both a public body and as an income generating organisation.

## **Values**

Three values — trusted, enabling, and progressive — underpin the way SQA works with learners, customers, partners, stakeholders, the wider public, and within the organisation itself.

We seek to be trusted by government and stakeholders to deliver on our statutory responsibilities. Our customers and users trust us to ‘get it right’ for them. We seek to be trusted by partners who know from experience that we deliver.

By providing high-quality qualifications, services, expertise, experience and support, we enable learners, customers and centres to achieve their goals; we enable employers, businesses and industry to recruit and develop skilled workforces; and we enable communities and societies to work towards productivity and growth.

We are continuing to develop progressive approaches to qualification development, assessment practice, and service delivery by using innovation and technology thus ensuring greater speed in turnaround and delivery; flexible products and approaches that retain rigour in quality; and value for money.

## **Approach**

Through its awarding and accreditation responsibilities, working with partners, SQA will ensure that the high standards in education, skills and training for which Scotland is renowned will continue to be maintained — whatever qualifications or services SQA delivers and wherever these are delivered.

SQA will continue to deliver a comprehensive and high-quality school qualifications system in Scotland which includes the new qualifications to support the senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence. SQA will support the Developing Scotland’s Young Workforce youth employment strategy playing its part as the leading public body. SQA will also continue to serve, support and evolve the wider education and training system in Scotland, working closely with schools, colleges, universities, training providers, employers and other public bodies to provide qualifications that prepare young people for work; help people make career changes; provide second chances for learners; assist business to upskill and reskill their workforces; enable learners to access and progress within further and higher education; and develop the entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

To ensure that SQA’s valuable resources (its products and services, expertise and experience) are maintained and used to their full advantage SQA will expand into wider markets through careful planning and appropriate investment. This will enable SQA to operate to the benefit of others whether that is the development of the individual learner, capacity building in a community or economic growth for a nation. This will also generate

income for SQA, which supports the achievement of the goal to reduce SQA's dependency on the public purse.

SQA is committed to supporting individual development and sustainable economic growth through its:

- ◆ products, such as through development of qualifications and assessment and support materials
- ◆ services through capacity building and credit rating
- ◆ contracts — funded by, and carried out on behalf of, other agencies/companies
- ◆ international consultancy projects — funded by, and carried out on behalf of, international governments, agencies and organisations

SQA operates throughout Scotland and in other selected geographical areas based on:

- ◆ public body/statutory responsibilities
- ◆ capacity to deliver
- ◆ social responsibilities
- ◆ sound business cases that balance resources and potential income
- ◆ income generating opportunities
- ◆ market intelligence
- ◆ existing expertise and track record
- ◆ partnership leverage

SQA works to ensure that all products and services it delivers provide good value for money.

### **Responsive delivery**

SQA's approach to delivery of products and services is flexible, pragmatic and responsive to customer and stakeholder needs and wishes. SQA will work to achieve its vision by continuing its commitment to public service combined with business acumen and integrity. It will be responsive to emerging needs and customer focused — delivering excellent products, exceptional service, and value for money to all its users and customers.

SQA will continue to work in partnership with others to fulfil its public body responsibilities, in relation to:

- ◆ public service reform and community planning
- ◆ alignment to the National Performance Framework
- ◆ consideration to the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education
- ◆ youth employment
- ◆ corporate parenting
- ◆ spending review priorities
- ◆ fraud prevention
- ◆ procurement
- ◆ shared services
- ◆ human resources
- ◆ transparency

SQA is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects difference.

It will also work in partnership on other activities where this has advantages for customers and users and where it is practicable to do so.

## **Section 2: SQA's Mission Statement and Strategic Goals**

### **Mission Statement**

#### **◆ Purpose**

'SQA's purpose is to provide products and services in skills, training and education which positively impact on individuals, organisations and society.'

#### **◆ Vision**

'We will digitally transform our organisation to offer customers better service by delivering efficient, scalable and new enabling approaches.'

### **Strategic Goals**

The strategic goals which have been mapped to the Scottish Government National Outcomes are as follows:

1. Develop, deliver and maintain a portfolio of qualifications and services to support the needs and aspirations of Scotland, its people and its economy.
2. Provide leadership and expertise in a range of areas including assessment, qualification development and quality enhancement.
3. Support the Scottish Government's agenda to maximise the benefits of international engagement and co-operation.
4. Ensure our culture and values support the engagement and wellbeing of our staff and foster their commitment to the success of SQA.
5. Deliver high-quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive services to our customers.
6. Continue to develop SQA as a leading public body and key player in the skills, training and education landscape.
7. Continue to pursue a business model that would enable SQA to reduce its dependency on the public purse, and invest in and improve the education and skills system.
8. Independently accredit, quality assure and regulate approved awarding bodies and qualifications thereby safeguarding the interests of learners, employers, parents, funding bodies, providers and the Scottish Government.

### **Performance monitoring**

Directorate strategy maps and detailed business plans will be prepared as a basis for monitoring progress via the Quarterly Performance Review.

## Section 3: Mapping of goals to National Outcomes

National Outcomes	
We live in Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe	1
We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people	2
We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation	3
Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens	4
Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed	5
We live longer healthier lives	6
We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society	7
We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk	8
We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger	
We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need	
We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others	
We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations	12
We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity	13
We reduce the local and global environmental impact of consumption and production	14
Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it	
Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs	16

2016-19 SQA Strategic Goals
Develop, deliver and maintain a portfolio of qualifications and services to support the needs and aspirations of Scotland, its people and its economy. 1 2 3 4 5 7 8 13
Provide leadership and expertise in a range of areas including assessment, qualification development and quality enhancement. 3 4 5 8 13
Support the Scottish Government's agenda to maximise the benefits of international engagement and co-operation. 1 2 3 13
Ensure our culture and values support the engagement and wellbeing of our staff and foster their commitment to the success of SQA. 2 3 5
Deliver high-quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive services to our customers. 16
Continue to develop SQA as a leading public body and key player in the skills, training and education landscape 1 2 3 4 7 12 14 16
Continue to pursue a business model that would enable SQA to reduce its dependency on the public purse, and invest in and improve the Education and Skills system. 2 16
Independently accredit, quality assure and regulate approved Awarding Bodies and qualifications thereby safeguarding the interests of learners. 1 3

## Section 4: 2016–17 Income and Expenditure Budget

	£m
Qualifications Entry Income	41.7
Other Income	11.1
Grant Funding	4.4
Additional Grant Funding <sup>1</sup>	12.3
Programme Grant Funding <sup>2</sup>	6.5
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>76.0</b>
Staff	26.8
Appointees	19.2
Other Operating Costs	23.5
Programme Grant Expenditure	6.5
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>76.0</b>
<b>Income and Expenditure Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>0</b>

### Notes

- 1 Scottish Government recognises that, as was the case for 2015–16, SQA will require further Grant in Aid to meet operational and Programme Grant costs that are beyond those covered within current SG budgets. The additional Grant in Aid requirement will be updated in line with scheduled reforecasting exercises.
- 2 Programme Grant Funding is funding received from bodies such as the Scottish Government to fund specific activity such as Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).