



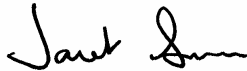
**Corporate Plan 2008–11**  
**Business Plan 2008–09**

# Foreword

SQA is ambitious for Scotland. We are determined to play a full and committed part in ensuring that the Scottish people and economy benefit from a qualifications and skills system that is all embracing and delivering and meeting Scotland's needs. Our qualifications and services must be dynamic and relevant to the needs of business, industry and individuals. We need to ensure everyone in Scotland has the opportunity to reach their full potential. These are significant but achievable goals. SQA has a major role to play in partnership with the Scottish Government and other stakeholder organisations in driving forward and delivering our ambitions.

I am pleased to be able to introduce our 2008–11 Corporate Plan. It sets out our strategic direction and goals for the next three years. Our plan contains six strategic objectives. We have introduced a new objective focused on our accreditation function. It is important that this function complements our strategic awarding functions.

We look forward to working with you to deliver our goals and shared ambitions for Scotland.



**Janet Brown**  
Chief Executive

# Corporate Plan for 2008–11

## Approach

This Corporate and Business Plan sets out our short- and medium-term goals in line with guidance from Scottish Ministers on national policy priorities, particularly the recent publication of *Skills for Scotland — a Lifelong Skills Strategy*.

Audit Scotland reviewed our approach to updating our Corporate and Business Plan in 2006. The review found that we have developed ‘a sound, integrated corporate planning process, including stakeholder consultation, which works effectively and has supported the development of clear objectives for the organisation’.

In line with the review recommendations, our Corporate and Business Plan objectives for 2008–11 are fewer in number, are more outcome-focused and contain less detail than in previous years. The development of these objectives was driven by our Board of Management’s assessment of strategic risks and opportunities for the organisation, and took account of our recent progress and the environment in which we operate.

We will demonstrate our progress in implementing these objectives through regular reports on the SQA Corporate Scorecard.

## Delivery through strong partnerships

As part of the wider Scottish education and training sector, we rely on a number of strong partnerships to develop our Corporate and Business Plan objectives and then to work together towards making our shared ambitions a reality.

We work with colleagues in the Schools and Lifelong Learning Directorates of the Scottish Government to develop our objectives, which are approved by Ministers, and in the delivery of all our functions and services. We are committed to working closely with the new Skills Body being established by the Scottish Government to help improve the delivery landscape in Scotland.

Our Advisory Council, Qualifications Committee, Accreditation Committee and International and Commercial Committee guide and direct policy development, and offer advice and support on our qualifications and services. We continue to build on the Partnership Agreement with the recognised trade unions representing our staff.

Successful partnership groups, with representation from stakeholder organisations, have been established to oversee major qualification development programmes including the Higher National and National Qualification Group Awards Key Partner Groups.

We work closely with awarding and accrediting bodies in other parts of the UK to share good practice and inform policy development, including participation in the Joint Council

for Qualifications, the UK Vocational Qualifications Reform Programme and preparations to showcase vocational skills and qualifications through *Worldskills London 2011*.

Directors and senior officers have a programme of regular meetings with senior representatives from a wide range of stakeholder organisations including:

- ◆ Learning and Teaching Scotland
- ◆ Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
- ◆ Scottish Funding Council
- ◆ Scotland's Colleges
- ◆ Scottish Further Education Unit
- ◆ Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
- ◆ Scottish Council for Independent Schools
- ◆ Headteachers' Association of Scotland
- ◆ Scottish Trades Union Congress and trade unions representing Scotland's education professionals — Educational Institution for Scotland, Professional Association of Teachers and Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association
- ◆ National Union of Students
- ◆ Scottish Parent Teacher Council
- ◆ Universities Scotland
- ◆ University and College Admission Service
- ◆ Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (Scotland)
- ◆ Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- ◆ Sector skills councils
- ◆ Industry groups and professional bodies
- ◆ Confederation of British Industry in Scotland
- ◆ Federation of Small Businesses
- ◆ Scottish Training Federation
- ◆ Learndirect Scotland

In recent months, we have added a number of new collaborative agreements to our existing strategic and delivery partnerships.

- ◆ Five new Information and Communications Technology vendors have joined the DIVA project which aims to ensure that global industry standards are embedded in our qualifications: Autodesk, Serif, IBM, Digidesign and Certified Internet Webmaster (CIW).
- ◆ We agreed Memorandums of Understanding with Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute linked to the launch of our Highlands and Islands Strategy in 2006.
- ◆ We have established a number of delivery partnerships linked to our commercial and international activity including Scotland's Colleges International, City and Guilds and NCFE.

## Corporate Plan 2008–11

Our Corporate and Business Plan 2008–11 reflects our vision and values.

Our vision for SQA as an organisation is ‘to be recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in qualifications and assessment’.

We have agreed five values to define the way our people will work with each other, customers and partners in delivering services for Scotland’s learners:

- ◆ Quality
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Innovation
- ◆ Partnership
- ◆ Service

## Strategic Drivers for 2008–11

These strategic drivers have informed the development of our Corporate and Business Plan objectives for 2008–11.

We need to:

- ◆ work with partners to ensure that the Scottish education and training system operates efficiently, flexibly and seamlessly around individuals’ varied learning pathways to support implementation of the Skills for Scotland Strategy
- ◆ be ready to respond to Ministerial decisions on the future of qualifications and assessment as the Curriculum for Excellence programme moves on to the next stage
- ◆ promote and maintain confidence in Scottish educational standards, raising awareness of the quality of our vocational education system, through our accrediting and regulatory role
- ◆ provide qualifications to support people in work, and that serve the needs of businesses that drive the Scottish economy, as well as finding ways to re-engage those hardest to reach
- ◆ work with partners to ensure that individual learners achieve their ambitions, and to make sure that Scotland’s skills pool is well matched to the needs of our growth industries
- ◆ understand, appreciate and value the diversity of people and adopt measures to make staff and users feel valued and able to achieve their full potential
- ◆ build on good practice from the HN Modernisation programme, to ensure that high quality, relevant and flexible qualifications are available at all levels of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
- ◆ pursue commercial opportunities and explore wider markets, to enhance the recognition of Scottish qualifications worldwide, and to provide additional investment in our qualifications and services

# Corporate Objectives 2008–11

Key Objectives	Corporate Objectives
<p><b>Objective 1</b> Provide qualifications, services and support to match the needs of individuals, society and the economy of Scotland</p>	<p>1.1 Optimise fit and coherence of our qualifications, services and support with stakeholder needs and objectives</p> <p>1.2 Promote understanding, choice and effective delivery of our existing products, services and support</p> <p>1.3 Manage on-going assessment and its quality assurance and certification</p>
<p><b>Objective 2</b> Inform and support national policy development and implementation</p>	<p>2.1 Become a recognised provider of leading edge ideas and robust evidence</p> <p>2.2 Maintain influential communications with key decision makers, opinion leaders and policy partners</p>
<p><b>Objective 3</b> Enhance our services and processes to make them better to use and more efficient</p>	<p>3.1 Develop and implement improvements to systems and processes</p> <p>3.2 Achieve agreed Efficient Government savings</p>
<p><b>Objective 4</b> Develop a highly-skilled, motivated and effective workforce</p>	<p>4.1 Provide effective leadership and direction</p> <p>4.2 Plan and manage individual and organisational development, resources and performance</p> <p>4.3 Manage recruitment, retention and reward</p> <p>4.4 Manage our appointees effectively</p>
<p><b>Objective 5</b> Increase the use of SQA qualifications and services nationally and internationally</p>	<p>5.1 Increase the use of our qualifications and services in Scotland and the UK</p> <p>5.2 Increase the use of our qualifications and services in targeted international markets</p> <p>5.3 Establish an effective commercial infrastructure to support increased use of our qualifications and services</p>
<p><b>Objective 6</b> Provide a service which promotes and maintains public confidence in accredited vocational qualifications and approved awarding bodies</p>	<p>6.1 Deliver our Accreditation service</p> <p>6.2 Develop our Accreditation service in line with national policy</p>

## Objective 1

### **Provide qualifications, services and support to match the needs of individuals, society and the economy of Scotland**

The provision of a high quality, relevant portfolio of qualifications to support individual, economic and skills development is fundamental to Scotland's success.

We are committed to:

- ◆ effective delivery of certification for the annual diet of assessments for National Qualifications for candidates in schools and colleges across Scotland
- ◆ developing core and essential as well as specific vocational skills
- ◆ providing opportunities for all: those in work, those seeking and preparing for work, those who find working or learning environments difficult and those who have high level general education
- ◆ designing these in partnership with learning providers, educators, employers and their representatives, and working to increase our ability to respond quickly to industry trends
- ◆ ensuring that the public, educators and employers continue to have confidence in the accuracy, relevance and fairness of the Scottish Standard
- ◆ offering modern support packages to promote understanding, choice and effective delivery of our qualifications

## Objective 2

### **Using our unique data and resources, inform and support national policy development and implementation**

As Scotland's national awarding and accrediting body, we have a unique ability and responsibility to contribute to policy decisions.

We are committed to:

- ◆ working with the Scottish Government and partners to take forward the outcomes of the Ministerial consultation on the future of qualifications and assessment and to implement other Ministerial decisions about the future of qualifications and assessment as the *Curriculum for Excellence* programme moves on to the next stage
- ◆ working with employers, their representatives and partners in economic development to ensure that individual learner choices are well matched with the skills pool needed to support our future growth industries
- ◆ supporting the SCQF Partnership in expanding and promoting the framework to give recognition and credit for a variety of learning experiences
- ◆ informing the on-going reform programme for vocational qualifications at the UK level

### **Objective 3**

#### **Enhance our services and processes to make them better to use and more efficient**

As a public service, we need to ensure that we are working efficiently, remain alert to opportunities to innovate and improve the delivery of our services through partnerships, technology or new ways of working.

We are committed to:

- ◆ offering value for money through provision of simple to use, secure and effective services
- ◆ improving the way we engage with all our customers, candidates and appointees
- ◆ keeping pace with best practice through streamlining our current processes, updating our working practices, and appropriate investment in e-enablement
- ◆ using new and emerging technologies to support policy implementation through developing and improving the way we assess learning
- ◆ exploring partnership opportunities to provide joint services or share resources

### **Objective 4**

#### **Develop a highly-skilled, motivated and effective workforce**

We must ensure that our skills mix, culture and structure promote our values: quality, integrity, innovation, partnership and service.

We are committed to:

- ◆ learning from best practice to improve the way that we plan and manage organisational capacity and capability
- ◆ building on the Partnership Agreement with our recognised trade unions to broaden and deepen employee consultation on strategic decisions
- ◆ reviewing the way we work with our appointees to make sure that our processes are clear, efficient and provide assurance that we are able to draw on the best available expertise

## **Objective 5**

### **Increase the use of our qualifications and services nationally and internationally**

We need to pursue commercial opportunities and explore wider markets in order to maximise on-going investment for our portfolio of qualifications and services, and to grow the recognition of Scottish qualifications, through learning from others.

We are committed to:

- ◆ increasing uptake of our qualifications in new markets to get the full benefit of the public investment in their development
- ◆ building capacity to manage commercial and international activity in a sustainable way

## **Objective 6**

### **Provide a service which promotes and maintains public confidence in accredited vocational qualifications and approved awarding bodies**

In line with national policy, our Accreditation service must demonstrate the principles of good regulation to grow public confidence in Scotland's vocational education system.

We are committed to:

- ◆ offering a service which is independent, proportionate, transparent, accountable and focused on the needs of learners, employers and training providers
- ◆ moving towards a more strategic risk-based form of regulation
- ◆ working closely with qualifications regulators in other parts of the UK to share good practice
- ◆ continuing to inform the development of the skills agenda in Scotland and the UK

## Business Plan for 2008–09

### Objective 1: Provide qualifications, services and support to match the needs of individuals, society and the economy of Scotland

Corporate Objectives	Business Objectives	Lead officer	Funding source
1.1 Optimise fit and coherence of our qualifications, services and support with stakeholder needs and objectives	1.1.1 Develop understanding of current market provision	<b>JMcD, JY, GS, KMcC, RS</b>	CORE/ GRANT FUNDED
	1.1.2 Develop clear qualifications, service and support strategies and plans to support economic growth	<b>JY, JMCD, GS</b>	CORE/ GRANT FUNDED
	1.1.3 Review existing qualifications, services and support to better meet stakeholder needs	<b>JY, JMCD, GS</b>	CORE/ GRANT FUNDED
	1.1.4 Develop new qualifications, services and support to better meet stakeholder needs	<b>JY, JMCD, GS</b>	CORE/ GRANT FUNDED/ COM
	1.1.5 Develop strong relationships with candidates and wider learning communities	<b>JY, ALL</b>	CORE
	1.1.6 Improve customer satisfaction with our qualifications, services and support	<b>JY, KMcC, GS</b>	CORE
1.2 Promote understanding, choice and effective delivery of our existing products, services and support	1.2.1 Set, monitor and maintain the standard of our qualifications	<b>JY, KMcC, GS</b>	CORE
	1.2.2 Support centres and stakeholders in understanding, choosing and delivering our products, services and support	<b>JY, NM, GS, KMcC</b>	CORE/ GRANT FUNDED

Corporate Objectives	Business Objectives	Lead officer	Funding source
1.3 Manage on-going assessment and its quality assurance and certification	1.3.1 Deliver the 2008 diet of National Qualifications examinations according to specified performance measures agreed with the Scottish Government	<b>KMcC, JY, GS, MC, RS</b>	CORE
	1.3.2 Deliver timely and accurate certification for all qualifications in our portfolio	<b>KMcC, JY, GS</b>	CORE
	1.3.3 Manage on-going quality assurance of centres and assessment for all qualifications in our portfolio	<b>KMcC, JY, GS</b>	CORE
	1.3.4 Contribute to delivery and on-going improvement of the national assessment system for 5–14	<b>JY, KMcC, GS</b>	GRANT FUNDED
	1.3.5 Extend the use of e-assessment	<b>JY, KMcC, GS</b>	GRANT FUNDED

## Objective 2: Using our unique data and resources, inform and support national policy development and implementation

Corporate Objectives	Business Objectives	Lead officer	Funding source
2.1 Become a recognised provider of leading edge ideas and robust evidence	2.1.1 Carry out effective scanning of our operating environment to anticipate 'hot topics'	<b>JY</b> , GS, NM	CORE
	2.1.2 Build capacity and capability to complete robust analysis of the economic, social and corporate impact of emerging policy ideas	<b>JY</b> , GS, KMcC, RS	CORE
	2.1.3 Publish robust and influential analysis to inform policy and implementation decisions, including presentation of our corporate position on latent opportunities and early trends	<b>JY</b> , GS, NM	CORE
	2.1.4 Develop and implement an effective knowledge management approach	<b>JY</b> , GS, NM, MC, KMcC	CORE
2.2 Maintain influential communications with key decision makers, opinion leaders and policy partners	2.2.1 Ensure SQA complies with the framework of guidance laid down by the Scottish Government	<b>JY</b> , GS, NM, MC, KMcC	CORE/ GRANT FUNDED
	2.2.2 Manage relationships with other policy partners, particularly informing the development of Sector Qualifications Strategies	<b>JY</b> , NM, JMcD, GS	CORE/ GRANT FUNDED

### Objective 3: Enhance our services and processes to make them better to use and more efficient

Corporate Objectives	Business Objectives	Lead officer	Funding source
3.1 Develop and implement improvements to systems and processes	3.1.1 Develop our culture, capacity and capability to deliver the opportunities identified through our continuous improvement approach	MC, All	CORE
	3.1.2 Review our mechanisms for approval of proposed developments to ensure that quick and sound decisions are taken	RS, All	CORE
	3.1.3 Review our programme management approach to ensure simple, flexible, high quality delivery of our services	KMcC, All	CORE
	3.1.4 Continue to expand provision of e-enabled services for all our customers, candidates, appointees and staff in line with our continuous improvement plan	KMcC, GS, NM, MC, JY, JMcD	GRANT FUNDED
3.2 Achieve agreed Efficient Government savings	3.2.1 Achieve compliance with e-government policy targets	RS, KMcC, MC, NM	CORE
	3.2.2 Identify opportunities to share services with other public service organisations	MC, All	CORE
	3.2.3 Maximise use of our integrated human resources and finance system to improve the quality of our management information	RS, MC, KMcC	CORE

## Objective 4: Develop a highly-skilled, motivated and effective workforce

Corporate Objectives	Business Objectives	Lead officer	Funding source
4.1 Provide effective leadership and direction	4.1.1 Improve our internal communication processes	MC, NM	CORE
	4.1.2 Consult and work with our Partnership Group to achieve our corporate objectives	MC, NM	CORE
	4.1.3 Positively influence our organisational culture through embedding our corporate values	MC, All	CORE
	4.1.4 Become an employer of choice through promotion of our corporate social responsibility, environmental management and equality and diversity aims	MC, All	CORE
	4.1.5 Manage leadership development through effective talent strategies	MC	CORE
4.2 Plan and manage individual and organisational development, resources and performance	4.2.1 Ensure that our organisational development activity is aligned to our corporate objectives	MC, All	CORE
	4.2.2 Design our organisational structure to support efficient and effective achievement of our objectives	MC, All	CORE
	4.2.3 Coach, develop and support our line managers	MC	CORE
	4.2.4 Embed a continuous improvement culture and provide the tools and techniques to apply continuous improvement across the organisation	MC, All	CORE
4.3 Manage recruitment, retention and reward	4.3.1 Develop a competitive employment package	MC	CORE
	4.3.2 Embed succession planning across the organisation	MC	CORE

<b>Corporate Objectives</b>	<b>Business Objectives</b>	<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Funding source</b>
4.4 Manage our appointees effectively	4.4.1 Improve appointee processes in line with our continuous improvement plan	MC, KMcC, JY, GS	CORE
	4.4.2 Introduce a revised fee structure for our appointees	MC, RS, KMcC	CORE

## Objective 5: Increase the use of our qualifications and services nationally and internationally

Corporate Objectives	Business Objectives	Lead officer	Funding source
5.1 Increase the use of our qualifications and services in Scotland and the UK	5.1.1 Grow our share of the Scottish market for qualifications and related services	<b>JMcD, JY, GS, NM</b>	COM
	5.1.2 Grow our share of the UK market for qualifications and related services	<b>JMcD, JY, NM, GS</b>	COM
5.2 Increase the use of our qualifications and services in targeted international markets	5.2.1 Grow our presence in selected international markets for qualifications and related services	<b>JMcD, JY, NM</b>	COM
	5.2.2 Develop qualification, service and support packages for selected international markets	<b>JMcD, JY, NM, GS</b>	COM
5.3 Establish an effective commercial infrastructure to support increased use of our qualifications and services	5.3.1 Work towards establishment of a fully operational trading company	<b>RS, All</b>	COM
	5.3.2 Implement the marketing strategy for our qualifications and services in Scotland, the UK and internationally	<b>JMcD, NM</b>	CORE/ COM
	5.3.3 Develop and implement a differentiated customer and partner management strategy	<b>JMcD, NM</b>	CORE/ COM
	5.3.4 Build capacity and capability for analysis of customer and market intelligence to inform sound investment decisions	<b>JMcD, JY, NM</b>	CORE/ COM
	5.3.5 Implement a revised pricing model for our qualifications and services in Scotland, the UK and international markets	<b>JMcD, RS, JY, GS</b>	CORE/ COM

**Objective 6: Provide a service which promotes and maintains public confidence in accredited vocational qualifications and approved awarding bodies**

Corporate Objectives		Business Objectives	Lead officer	Funding source	
6.1	Deliver our Accreditation service	6.1.1	Improve customer satisfaction with our Accreditation service	JMcD, NM	GRANT FUNDED
		6.1.2	Implement audit and monitoring activities	JMcD	GRANT FUNDED
		6.1.3	Continue to implement credit rating and levelling for SVQs	JMcD	GRANT FUNDED
		6.1.4	Increase public awareness of our Accreditation service and its role in relation to the vocational education system	JMcD, NM	GRANT FUNDED /CORE
6.2	Develop our Accreditation service in line with national policy	6.2.1	Work towards implementation of the recommendations of the Accreditation and Regulation Review to support <i>Skills for Scotland — a Lifelong Skills Strategy</i>	JMcD, All	GRANT FUNDED
		6.2.2	Work in partnership with UK qualifications regulators, government departments and Sector Skills Development Agency to implement the revised funding model for the National Occupational Standards Programme	JMcD, JY, RS	GRANT FUNDED

## Summary Budget 2008-09

<b>SQA Budget 2008-09</b>	<b>Budget 2008-09 £m</b>
<b>INCOME</b>	62.5
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Staff	22.4
Appointees	16.6
Other Operational Costs	23.5
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>62.5</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>0</b>