



QUALIFICATIONS SUPPORT TEAM for the HN SCIENCE Portfolio of Awards

Minutes of the 27th Meeting held at 13:00 on Thursday 24 March 2016 in Radisson Blu Hotel, Argyle Street, Glasgow

Present		Not Present	
Carlyn McNab (Chair)	Glasgow Kelvin College	Elaine McCauley	Ayrshire College
Marti Anderson	Ayrshire College	Miriam Walsh	Dundee and Angus College
Pamela Duke	Dundee and Angus College	Erica Parkinson	Fife College
Moira Wilson	Forth Valley College <i>(attending for Fiona Jackson)</i>	Mhairi Hay	Forth Valley College
Steven Donnelly	Glasgow Kelvin College	Fiona Jackson	Forth Valley College
Samantha Bright	Moray College	Joseph Jamieson	Glasgow Clyde College
Derek Steven	New College Lanarkshire	Joan Purdie	Glasgow Clyde College
Doug Fraser	North East Scotland College	Jane Manson	Inverness College
David McCallum	West College Scotland <i>(attending for Sandra Spence)</i>	Kenneth Boyd	North Highland College
Jonathan Gillies	SQA	Robert Boyd	Perth College
Kirsty Mitchell	SQA	Ruth Johnston	Perth College
		Leann Tait	North East Scotland College
		Sandra Spence	West College Scotland
		Amanda McCoubrey	West Lothian College

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies had been received from Miriam Walsh, Erica Parkinson, Mhairi Hay, Fiona Jackson, Joan Purdie, Leann Tait, Ruth Johnson and Sandra Spence.

2. Minutes and Actions of last meeting held on 17 November 2015

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Following the previous QST meeting, Jonathan had spoken to Martin Brown, Qualifications Manager for Mathematics, who had confirmed that a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) arrangement had been put in place for the *Mathematics for Science 1* (H8XP 33) Unit. The Mathematics for Science 1 (H8XP 33) Unit can be awarded through RPL if a learner has achieved Higher Mathematics at Grade C or above.

A Consultation paper on presenting data in graphs, charts and tables in NQ science subjects had been circulated following the previous QST meeting. Jonathan explained that work was ongoing in this area, and should be finalised in the coming months.

3. HN Science Review

Units

Glasgow Kelvin College, Dundee and Angus College and New College Lanarkshire were currently delivering the new HNC Applied Sciences Group Award. Steven commented that the main difficulty that Glasgow Kelvin College had experienced with regard to the *Laboratory Skills for Science Industries* (H91V 34) Unit was workload, with up to nineteen pieces of evidence required from one learner. It was also noted that it was easier for Chemistry lecturers to deliver the *Laboratory Skills for Science Industries* Unit than Biology lecturers, and there was a feeling that there was some duplication with regard to laboratory diaries and pro formas. Doug commented that, as Senior EV, it was clear that the *Laboratory Skills for Science Industries* Unit was developing the skills in learners it was designed to. It was agreed that QST members would monitor the delivery and assessment of the *Laboratory Skills for Science Industries* Unit during the next academic session with a view to possibly refining the Evidence Requirements.

Clarification was requested regarding centres creating their own instruments of assessment for re-sit purposes. It was explained that centres were able to submit any centre devised instruments of assessment for prior verification by SQA. Prior verified assessments were as a matter of course published on the SQA Secure website, in order to encourage centres to share materials.

The centres delivering the new *Applied Sciences: Graded Unit 1* (H91W 34) reported that they had experienced no problems with this, and had found the marking criteria clear. It was requested that QST members contacted Kirsty if they experienced any issues with the new Units.

Changes had been proposed to two new Unit specifications, *Physics: Light and Optics* (H93J 35) and *Aromatic Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills* (H92N 35). Copies of the Unit specifications with the indicated proposed changes were distributed. It was agreed that electronic copies of the Unit specifications would be e-mailed to QST members, so that the proposed changes could be considered and agreement reached.

Action— QST members to contact Kirsty with any issues with regard to the Units in the new HNC/D Group Awards.

Action— Kirsty to circulate to QST members Unit specifications with proposed changes for *Physics: Light and Optics* and *Aromatic Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills* Units.

ASPs

A list of the published HN Science ASPs was distributed and it was noted that some ASPs were behind schedule, in large part due to other time commitments of the writers and/or vetters. The level 7 ASPs had been prioritised, but it was hoped that all level 7 and level 8 ASPs would be published by the summer. As had been agreed at the previous QST meeting, draft versions of the unpublished ASPs, where available, would be sent to centres requesting these, with the understanding that these were not finalised documents and were subject to change. It was pointed out that, for some of the new Units, the ASPs from the previous version of the Unit could also still give guidance.

Concerns about the size of the assessment in the *DNA and Genetics* (H929 34) ASP were discussed. Jonathan explained that the size of the assessment was linked to the Unit specification, and that the sampling requirements outlined in the Unit specification might require adjustment. It was agreed that QST members would monitor the assessment of the *DNA and Genetics* Unit during the next academic session with a view to possibly refining the sampling requirements.

Moira raised a query regarding a learner who wished to move from the new HNC Applied Sciences Group Award at another college to the old HNC Applied Sciences Group Award at Forth Valley College. It was explained that the credit transfer arrangements outlined in the new HNC Applied Sciences Group Award Specification were also valid when transferring from the new to the old Group Award.

Action— QST members to contact Kirsty should they wish to receive draft versions of the ASPs.

Action— QST members to contact Kirsty with any issues with regard to the ASPs in the new HNC/D Group Awards.

Understanding Standards materials

Understanding Standards materials for the *Laboratory Skills for Science Industries* Unit (H91V 34) and the *Applied Sciences: Graded Unit 1* (H91W 34) had now been published.

Further materials would also shortly be published for the *Applied Sciences: Graded Unit 2* (H91X 35), *Applied Biological Sciences: Graded Unit 2* (H91Y 35) and the *Applied Chemical Sciences: Graded Unit 2* (H92L 35).

4. NC Applied Sciences

A scoping exercise had been carried out for the level 5 and level 6 NC Applied Sciences Group Awards, and following the previous QST meeting a link to an online survey had been circulated to gather further feedback regarding the Mathematics content of both Group Awards. It was noted that the revised level 5 NC Applied Sciences Group Award would contain Mathematics at SCQF level 4, and the revised level 6 NC Applied Sciences Group Award would contain Mathematics at SCQF level 5.

New SCQF level 4 and level 5 Mathematics Units would be developed for the revised Group Awards, as well as new SCQF level 5 Biology, Chemistry and Physics Units. Old Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher Mathematics Units in the current Group Awards are due to lapse in July 2016, but would be extended until July 2018 to minimise development work at centres and to adequately allow for transition to the new Mathematics Units. In addition, five existing Units would be revised, including three former Scotvec modules which would be re-written into the new SQA Unit shell. It was also confirmed that the Intermediate 1 Biology Units would not be re-written.

It was confirmed that development of the new level 5 and level 6 NC Applied Sciences Group Awards would begin shortly, with completion planned for the end of the calendar year. Volunteers were required for the Qualifications Design Team (QDT) and Unit writing/vetting, and expression of interest forms for this would be circulated to QST members.

Action— Kirsty to e-mail expression of interest forms to QST members.

5. NPA and PDA Laboratory Science- Scoping exercise

A scoping exercise had been carried out for the level 6 NPA Laboratory Science Group Award and the level 7 PDA Laboratory Science Group Award, and draft recommendations had now been received. The draft recommendation for the NPA Laboratory Science Group Award was to withdraw the Group Award, and the QST's view on this was requested. While there was other provision, it was felt that the NPA Laboratory Science Group Award was a good fit for potential collaboration with schools. There was an overall feeling from QST members that the NPA Laboratory Science Group Award should be retained.

The draft recommendation for the PDA Laboratory Science Group Award, which had a good uptake, was to retain the Group Award but make amendments to the Group Award framework. These amendments were intended to increase the practical component, as well as to allow more flexibility and remove barriers to achievement.

6. NPA Science and Health, NPA Science and Technology, NPA Practical Science

Jonathan reported that these NPAs were new Group Awards but had low uptake. These Group Awards had been developed prior to Curriculum for Excellence and made use of a variety of different types of Unit (Skills for Work, Intermediate and NC style Units). The question was raised as to whether this was a

barrier, and whether a scoping exercise could be worthwhile to establish if these Group Awards might have currency with changes. It was agreed that a scoping exercise would take place towards the end of the year to ascertain the fitness for purpose of these Group Awards.

7. LATA SVQs

Jonathan reported that the Laboratory and Associated Technical Activities (LATA) SVQs were due to lapse in November 2016, and it was noted that Cogent, the Sector Skills Council, were planning a review of the LATA National Occupational Standards (NOS). SQA will request an extension to the LATA SVQs to allow time for this this review to take place.

8. AOB

Samantha requested that future QST meetings being held via videoconferencing, to potentially increase attendance. Kirsty will investigate whether or not videoconferencing can be used for the next QST meeting.

Action— Kirsty to investigate whether or not videoconferencing can be used for the next QST meeting.

ACTION GRID

	Action	Date completed
1	QST members to contact Kirsty with any issues with regard to the Units in the new HNC/D Group Awards.	
2	Kirsty to circulate to QST members Unit specifications with proposed changes for <i>Physics: Light and Optics</i> and <i>Aromatic Chemistry: Theory and Laboratory Skills</i> Units.	19/04/2016
3	QST members to contact Kirsty should they wish to receive draft versions of the ASPs.	
4	QST members to contact Kirsty with any issues with regard to the ASPs in the new HNC/D Group Awards.	
5	Kirsty to e-mail expression of interest forms to QST members.	19/04/2016
6	Kirsty to investigate whether or not videoconferencing can be used for the next QST meeting.	