



## **QUALIFICATIONS SUPPORT TEAM for the HN SCIENCE Portfolio of Awards**

### **Minutes of meeting held at 10am on 2 September 2024 on MS teams**

#### **Present:**

Conor Larkin (Glasgow Clyde College), David Whitley (External Verifier), Fiona Jackson (Forth Valley College), Jane Manson (Inverness College), Jonathan Gillies (SQA), Julia Wright (Dundee and Angus College), Laura Young (External Verifier), Melanie McConnell (West Lothian College), Michael Balzo (New College Lanarkshire), Pamela Duke (Dundee and Angus College), Sandra Spence (West College Scotland), Susan Bunton (External Verifier)

#### **Welcome and apologies**

Jonathan welcomed all QST members to the meeting.

#### **1. Actions from last meeting**

All actions were confirmed as being completed.

#### **2. Subject guidance 2024-25**

Jonathan confirmed that the subject guidance will remain in place for session 2024-25. No changes have been made to the subject guidance and the flexibility for session 2024-25 will be the same as the previous session.

The subject guidance is now considered to be mainstream and it will be retained for future sessions.

#### **3. NC in Applied Sciences**

The NC in Applied Sciences frameworks require six mandatory credits from two sciences, with this content coming from the old Intermediate 2/Higher units or the new CfE National 5/Higher units that were previously part of the National Courses.

Sandra highlighted that these frameworks contain a large number of science units and queried why the six mandatory credits must be selected from the units that were previously part of the National Courses. David noted that the units that were previously part of the Biology/Chemistry/Physics National Courses provide a good breadth of coverage of the science, and that may explain why the six mandatory credits must be selected from these units.

QST members agreed that it may be possible to group other units together to give greater flexibility when selecting the six mandatory credits from two sciences. However, the grouping of units would need to ensure a good breadth of coverage of each science.

Jonathan agreed to contact all delivering centres to capture their thoughts on the proposed change. Jonathan will also contact all colleges that are not currently delivering these group awards to ascertain if this change would make the group awards an option for delivery moving forward. Any intelligence gathered will be discussed at a future QST meeting.

#### **4. Laboratory Skills for Science Industries**

Laura highlighted concerns with regard to the oral presentation in the Laboratory Skills for Science Industries unit, noting that it can be challenging for some students. Potential alternatives to the oral presentation were discussed. This included considering more of a questioning / viva type model using the poster or graded unit as a basis for discussion. QST members were in agreement that alternative approaches should be explored.

Jonathan agreed to pilot alternative approaches for any students in session 2024-25 that may struggle with the oral presentation. Centres should contact Jonathan if they would like to pilot an alternative approach in session 2024-25.

#### **5. AOB**

Sandra highlighted that the My Alerts (weekly email from SQA) for HN content on the SQA websites was not working. Recent updates to HN units/ASPs were not being included in the weekly email alerts. Jonathan agreed to raise awareness of this issue with colleagues in SQA's web team.

Jonathan advised that the next meeting of the HN science QST would be arranged for January 2025.

## ACTION GRID

Action	Date completed
Jonathan to contact all delivering centres for the NC in Applied Sciences to capture their thoughts on the six mandatory credits from two different sciences.	
Jonathan to contact all colleges that are not currently delivering the NC In Applied Sciences to ascertain if changes to the six mandatory credits from two different sciences would make the group awards an option for delivery moving forward.	
Centres to contact Jonathan if they would like to pilot an alternative approach to the oral presentation in the Laboratory Skills for Science Industries unit	
Jonathan to contact SQA's web team to raise awareness of the My Alerts issue	
Laura to send QST members an online poll to ascertain the best date for the next meeting of the HN Science QST	