



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

### **Minutes of meeting held at 10am on Thursday 20 April 2023 on MS teams**

#### **Present:**

Ania Sosnowska (Ayrshire College), Hunia Arshad (Edinburgh College), Kevin Spears (Fife College), Fiona Jackson (Forth Valley College), Conor Larkin (Glasgow Clyde College), Sandra Dickson (Glasgow Kelvin College), Jane Manson (Inverness College), Doug Fraser - Chair (North East Scotland College), Suzanne Thompson (West College Scotland), Rhianna Curran (West Lothian College), Melanie McConnell (West Lothian College), Jonathan Gillies (SQA), Laura Gibson (SQA)

#### **Not Present:**

Alan McDowall (Ayrshire College), Julia Wright (Dundee and Angus College), Pamela Duke (Dundee and Angus College), Christine Hutcheson (Edinburgh College), Colin McMorrin (Forth Valley College), Marcelle McIlroy (Glasgow Kelvin College), Sam Bright (Moray College), Derek Steven (New College Lanarkshire), Kenneth Boyd (North Highland College), Donna Cousins (Perth College), Joe Burman (Perth College), Sandra Spence (West College Scotland), Mary McGibbon (West College Scotland), Maureen Wallace (SQA)

### **1. Session 2023-24**

Jonathan gave an update on the announcement for HNVQ arrangements for session 2023-24. Jonathan confirmed SQAs decision is to return to pre-pandemic assessment arrangements. This includes the return of Graded Units, closed-book assessments and all practical requirements. However, Jonathan advised that QSTs have been asked to consider which modifications from session 2022-23, if any, should be retained. Jonathan noted that this does not include Graded Units, Graded Units must be completed in session 23-24.

Many QST members raised concerns with regard to the return of Graded Units, the loss of flexibility of closed-book/open-book assessments and the number of laboratory reports required. Doug noted that moving forward it would be advantageous to have a broader range of assessment types. Doug also advised that the simplified pro formas could be used for assessing practical experiments. Laura will re-send the simplified pro formas and guidance to QST members.

Jonathan confirmed SQA are working on a parameters document which will assist QSTs when making decisions with regard to any changes for session 23-24. This will ensure a consistent approach across all

subjects and qualification types. Jonathan noted that any modifications would also need to ensure consistency across delivering centres.

It was agreed that two working groups would be set up, one to discuss practical requirements for session 23-24 and another to discuss closed-book/open-book requirements for session 23-24. QST members were asked to volunteer to join the working groups or to nominate a colleague to represent each college. It was agreed that each college could nominate a maximum of 2 reps for each group. Deadlines for this work is very tight, and any volunteers must express an interest by Thursday 27 April. Indicative dates/times for both meetings are noted below:

- Practical requirements group will meet on Thursday 4 May 10.00 - 11.30
- Closed-book/open-book group will meet on Friday 5 May 11.00 - 12.30

QST members were encouraged to liaise with colleagues to discuss any proposed changes for next session. Any proposed changes to practical requirements and/or closed/open-book requirements must have a robust rationale/justification. The deadline for any requests is Tuesday 2nd May. A template will be provided for centres to complete to identify any units where a change should be considered. Jonathan advised that significant changes would not be actioned at this stage, as these changes would require consultation with various key stakeholders.

## 2. AOB

Ania queried when HN Next Gen would be piloted for the HN science group awards. Jonathan confirmed that there is currently a pause on any new qualifications being developed to allow an evaluation and review of the provision that is currently being piloted.

An online poll will be distributed to QST members to ascertain the best date/time for the next meeting, which will be around the end of May, to discuss the output from the 2 working groups.

## ACTION GRID

Action	Date completed
Laura to re-send simplified pro formas and guidance to all QST members.	
Volunteers requested to join the working groups. 2 reps per college, per group. The deadline for volunteers is Thursday 27 April.	
QST members to liaise with colleagues to discuss any proposed changes for next session. Any proposed changes to practical requirements and/or closed/open-book requirements must have a robust rationale/justification. The deadline for any requests is Tuesday 2nd May.	

Laura to send QST members an online poll to ascertain the best date for the next meeting of the HN Science QST.	
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