

SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY**BEO29/1.12 i****BOARD OF MANAGEMENT – 1 JULY 2021**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Management held at 1pm on Thursday 29 April 2021 by video conference.

Members

- * Mr D Middleton (Chair)
- * Ms F Robertson (Chief Executive)
- * Ms E Craig
- * Ms A Davis
- * Mr S Hagney
- * Mrs J Handley
- * Dr W Mayne
- * Mr H McKay
- * Mr G Smith
- * Mr R Stewart
- * Dr K Thomson

Officers

- * Ms J Blair
- * Mr M Baxter
- * Mr L Downie
- * Mr J McMorris
- * Dr G Stewart
- * Mrs D Mahmoud

Observers

[REDACTED], Committee Manager
 [REDACTED], Interim Corporate Office Support
 Ms M McKerrell, Head of QA (NQ)
 [REDACTED], Awarding 2021 Programme Director
 Mr S Borley, Head of Strategic Planning and Governance

* Indicates present on the call

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, including:

- Ms McKerrell, Head of QA (NQ); and
- [REDACTED], Awarding 2021 Programme Director
- Mr Borley, Head of Strategic Planning and Governance

The Chair noted that no apologies had been received.

1.11 Declaration of Any Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest raised in relation to the agenda.

Whilst not a conflict of interest, it was acknowledged that Mr Hagney and Dr Thomson held an interest through their positions as Heads of Centre. Furthermore, it was noted that Ms Davis and Mr Hagney had children studying at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels.

The Chair noted that members of the Board would never be put in a position directly to affect the outcomes relating to their centres or family members.

1.12 Matters Arising

There were no other matters arising that would not be covered in the course of the agenda.

1.2 Chief Executive's Update

The Chair handed over to the Chief Executive for a brief update on ongoing discussions around appeals. She reported that a number of meetings had taken place including with the learner panel and further discussions were planned with the Scottish Youth Parliament and the working groups to work through a range of issues.

The National Qualifications 2021 Group continued to meet and had agreed that further messages of reassurance were required at this time.

There was a brief update on the post-election period, including the forthcoming OECD Review.

Regarding the recruitment of the Director of Communications post, the Chief Executive reported that the final panel had convened the previous day supported by Board member, Anna Davis and Communications Consultant, [REDACTED], and she was hopeful that a positive outcome would be announced in the coming days. The Chair had participated in one of the exercises undertaken by candidates.

The Board noted the update, with thanks.

1.3 Awarding 2021

[REDACTED] provided an overview of current status of the programme, key dates, issues and risks, reporting that the overall status of the programme remained at amber and all other KPIs remained the same.

[REDACTED] reported on the high volume of activity in the communications and stakeholder engagement workstreams and highlighted the risk of programme status change if there was delay to the draft appeals model approval.

[REDACTED] reported positive progress in deliver of assessment materials, centre selections and appointee release, with the deadline of 10 May considered manageable. Regarding the assessment evidence project, planned phases had been successfully completed and live operation was now underway.

The Board welcomed the update, noting in particular the assurance around appointee release. They went on to discuss options for the recording of risks upon which full mitigation depends on others as well as SQA.

It was agreed that the communications strategy would be brought to the Board for update and discussion.

With regards to the appeals model, the Board acknowledged the many different sets of interests and welcomed the diligent work being undertaken to work through these challenges.

The Board noted that colleagues had been pursuing the scope to make available a limited appeals process in June, in particular support for those priority learners who are progressing to further or higher education. It was noted that the subject would be brought back to the Board for discussion the following week.

The Chair thanked members for their time and input to discussions at the meeting and noted that the Board would meet again on 12 May 2021, following discussions of the final appeals model at Advisory Council and Qualifications Committee on 6 and 10 May 2021.