

PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE – 8 NOVEMBER 2022 For approval

Minutes of the fifteenth meeting of the Performance Committee held on Tuesday
16 August 2022 at 10 am by Microsoft Teams.

Members

- * Ms A Davis (Convenor)
- * Mr H McKay
- * Mrs J Handley

Officers

- Mr M Baxter
- * Ms J Blair
- * [REDACTED]
- * Mr J Booth
- Mr M Campbell
- * Mr A Dickson
- Mr L Downie
- * Mrs D Mahmoud
- Mr J McMorris
- * Ms Y Raven
- * Ms F Robertson
- Dr G Stewart

In attendance

- * Mr S Borley, SQA
- * Mrs J Faulds, SQA (PC15/7 – 15/8 only)
- * [REDACTED], SQA
- * [REDACTED], SQA
- * [REDACTED], SQA
- * [REDACTED], SQA
- * Ms L McGrath, SQA
- * Mr D Middleton, SQA Chair
- * Mr S Sharkey, SQA

* indicates present

15/1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Convenor welcomed everyone to the fifteenth meeting including Ms Yazmin Raven, Head of Strategic Planning & Governance who was welcomed to her first meeting.

A welcome was also extended to, Mr David Middleton, SQA Chair, Ms Liz McGrath, Head of Qualifications Portfolio Management, who was deputising for Dr Stewart, Mr Stephen Sharkey, Head of Service Delivery, who was deputising for Business Systems, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Baxter, Mr Campbell, Mr Downie, and Dr Stewart.

15/2 **DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

There were no conflicts of interest declared on the agenda.

15/3 **PREVIOUS MEETING**

i **Minutes from previous meeting**

The minutes of the thirteenth meeting held on 16 May 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

ii **Action Grid**

The Committee noted the closure of the one action recorded.

iii **Workplan**

The Committee noted the contents of the workplan.

15/4 **MATTERS ARISING**

The Committee were reminded that SQA had published a corporate plan in 2020-21 covering a three-year period to March 2023, with deliverables for the Corporate Performance Framework. Following discussions with the Scottish Government there would not be a requirement for SQA to develop a new Corporate Plan given the transitional period to the new replacement organisation. In accordance with standard practice, annual business plans would continue to be developed until the new replacement organisation was established. The Committee was assured that SQA would continue to operate and meet its statutory duties.

15/5 **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REVIEW – Q1**

██████████ provided a comprehensive overview of the report that covered the period April to June 2022. She reported that, out of the five Outcomes, three had been assessed at green and two at amber. The changes within the deliverables for

2022-23 were highlighted and it was noted that there was some narrative change to some of them, three completed ones had been removed and one new addition had been added.

The following areas were covered during the discussion, and the Committee:

Perform

- Noted that, within this strand, one new deliverable around SQA's cyber maturity and resilience had been added and that out of the nine deliverables six had been assessed at green, and three at amber.

- Suggested that it would be useful to include statistics on unfilled vacancies within the People Dashboard.
- Welcomed that trend data had been included for leavers and movers to date. It was enquired whether it was possible to project data for the future. In response, it was noted that seasonal flux would need to be considered and that it would be explored to identify what data could be provided.
- Noted that it was voluntary for colleagues to disclose equality and diversity data and that only around half of the workforce had completed this, despite assurance from management to staff that this data was gathered only to enable SQA to better understand the composition within the organisation.
- Were encouraged that a remedial plan was in place to bring the service-level agreement for the Streetworks Qualifications Register back in line by the end of Q2.
- Enquired around Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) and, in response, it was noted that discussions remained ongoing, and that there was a refocused Scottish Government FA Enhancement Group that would plan and gain appropriate approval for improvements to all aspects of FA. Additionally, Education Scotland had conducted a review of Foundation Apprenticeships that had identified some concerns about the delivery and performance of these and it was agreed that this would be shared with the Committee.

Progress

- Noted that out of the six deliverables within the strand, three had been assessed at green and three at amber.
- Requested an update on the succession planning and talent identification underway within Directorates. In response it was noted that discussions continued to fill remaining gaps, and all identified successors would have SMART objectives associated to their succession development plans.
- In response to an enquiry around the ISO Expansion Programme it was noted that phase one was to fully integrate the requirements of the ISO 9001:2015 standard within all teams in the Finance & Corporate Services Directorate. It was anticipated to be complete by the end of Q3. Following testing and lessons learned from the process, a full detailed implementation plan would be developed to include all teams, business areas, and Directorates.
- Noted that the Policy Review group had representatives from HR, Reward, and trade unions. The review process was to ensure that existing and new policies were legally compliant and ensure compliance with SQA processes and values including the completion of a full Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA).
- Enquired if the programme of work to review all qualification development related policies had been completed by the target date of July 2022. In response it was advised that, although all policies had been revised, there had been a delay due to conflicting schedules by the Qualifications Directorate Management Team who had

yet to be formally endorse these. It was anticipated that this would be completed by the next quarter.

Transition

- Noted that the one deliverable within the strand had been assessed at green.
- Welcomed that the new Qualifications Body Delivery Board programme had identified a strong planning base by agreeing on what was achievable by the end of 2022 and what work would fall into 2023.
- Noted that discussions continued with the Scottish Government around the additional resource requirements needed to deliver the programme whilst SQA were continuing to deliver its existing functions. The Committee was assured that SQA would continue to operate and meet its statutory duties.
- Were mindful that SQA would encounter a lot of performance and capacity challenges until confirmation was received from the Scottish Government.
- Noted that once the SQA Board had reviewed and discussed the overall plans for the reform programme, it would be clarified what the Committee should oversee in terms of performance across the programme.

In closing, the Committee commended SQA for the continuing development of the report.

15/6 STRATEGIC BEST VALUE AND FINANCIAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Mr Dickson provided an update on the ongoing programme of work and advised that progress had slowed in the last quarter, predominantly due to competing demands of key individuals.

During discussion, it was explained that within the Cost Allocation Module, there was data available by product for 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22, including the percentage of SQA expenditure allocated to products. It was noted that this work had assisted in answering numerous information requests around fees and charges and would be valuable for the new replacement organisation.

The Committee noted the update provided.

15/7 SQA HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE: 2021-22

Mrs Jacqui Faulds, head of Appointee Management, was welcomed to the meeting who provided a comprehensive overview of the health and safety activities during the financial year 2021-2022 and the planned activities for 2022-23.

She was pleased to advise that SQA had just been notified that they had achieved their eighth consecutive Gold Award in the internationally renowned Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Health and Safety Awards and this was commended by the Committee.

Discussing the plans for 2022-23, the Committee suggested that, given the change in the law in Scotland and the requirement to have interlinked fire alarms, a campaign around this could be beneficial.

15/8 SMARTER WORKING PROGRAMME

Mrs Faulds provided a comprehensive overview of SQA's Smarter Working Programme. In the ensuing discussion the Committee:

- Welcomed that the programme was directly linked to the People Strategy and that SQA had enabled colleagues, where possible, control over where they work.
- Were reassured that management would continue to monitor the programme to ensure it worked in practice, assessing any impact on business delivery, whilst ensuring that colleagues' health and wellbeing continued to be a priority.
- Noted that some floors in the Optima building had been redesigned to support smarter working arrangements such as by providing enhanced working environments and kitchen / social areas, and a 'Wellbeing' room and that the same provisions would also be available in the Lowden office shortly.

Mrs Faulds left the meeting.

15/9 COMMITTEE STANDING ORDERS

Mr Borley presented the Committee Standing Orders as per the annual review schedule, noting that it was a critical document, and some minor amendments were proposed.

The Committee endorsed the amendments and agreed that the Standing Orders would be presented to the SQA Board for formal approval at its September meeting.

15/10 FOCUS FOR NEXT MEETING

The Committee considered the items for the next meeting and agreed the agenda would be established from the workplan.

15/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business raised.

15/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would take place on Tuesday 8 November 2022 and would be held by MS Teams.

PFN 1 Overview of Exit Data

The report provided the Committee a summary analysis of the reasons why colleagues have chosen to leave SQA, covering the period June 2021 to June 2022.

The Committee welcomed the report.

PRIVATE SESSION

Review of Effectiveness

Following the meeting, members of the Committee met separately (in the absence of SQA Officers) to undertake the annual review of its own effectiveness.