

## **HN Science Qualifications Support Team (QST)**

**Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 9 June 2026 (via Microsoft Teams)**

### **Present:**

Anne Marie Allan (West College Scotland), Anu Mital (North East Scotland College), Carole Barnes (Ayrshire College), Colin McMorrin (Forth Valley College), Conor Larkin (Glasgow Clyde College), Donna Cousins (Perth College), Doug Fraser (Senior External Verifier), Fiona Jackson (Forth Valley College), Graham Motion (Fife College), Iain Cameron (External Verifier), Jane Manson (Inverness College), Joanne Mathers (Perth College), Jonathan Gillies (Qualifications Scotland), Jordan Gulland (Qualifications Scotland), Julia Wright (Dundee and Angus College), Leann Tait (External Verifier), Marko Prorocic (External Verifier), Michael Balzo (New College Lanarkshire), Michael McKenna (Qualifications Scotland), Sandra Dickson (Glasgow Kelvin College), Sandra Spence (West College Scotland), Sion Snape (North East Scotland College)

### **Welcome, introductions and apologies**

Jonathan welcomed all QST members to the meeting and introduced Jordan Gulland, Qualifications Officer for HN Science.

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

All actions were confirmed as being completed.

### **2. Human Body Structure and Function (H92C 35) – Duration of assessment**

Jonathan advised Human Body Structure and Function (H92C 35) was identified as a unit which would benefit from an increase in assessment duration from 90 to 120 minutes.

There was a strong consensus from members to increase the duration.

### **Actions agreed:**

- Increase assessment duration for Human Body Structure and Function (H92C 35) to 120 minutes.

### **3. NC in Applied Sciences – Updates to frameworks**

Jonathan advised the new framework for the NC in Applied Sciences at SCQF level 5 has been put forward to the Business Change Group for noting and will be progressed over the summer. The new framework will be available for the start of next session.

The review of SCQF level 6 framework was completed by the working group. This will not be revised as no significant changes were identified.

#### **Actions agreed:**

- Changes to the framework at SCQF Level 5 to be progressed as agreed.

### **4. HNC in Applied Sciences - New optional microbiology unit at SCQF level 7**

Conor proposed adding a new optional group to the framework containing Microorganisms: Growth, Activity and Significance (F21L 34) and Microbiology: Theory and Laboratory Skills (H92G 34). A restriction will be put in place so centres can only select one of the units.

Members were widely in agreement.

#### **Actions agreed:**

- Microorganisms: Growth, Activity and Significance (F21L 34) and Microbiology: Theory and Laboratory Skills (H92G 34) to be added to a new restricted optional group.

### **5. Biotechnology: An Introduction (H926 34) – updating and modernisation**

This item was postponed until the next meeting. Members were asked to consult with their colleagues on their views on this unit.

### **6. Feedback from external verification activities**

Douglas advised issues had been identified during external verification activities with schools delivering NPAs. Issues appear to have arisen due to schools interpreting unit specifications incorrectly leading to candidates carrying out inadequate experiments and submitting insufficient evidence.

The verification group have started work to revise unit specifications to ensure they are clear including revising suggested practical experiments and project titles.

The verification group will take the opportunity to review all units within NPAs to ensure requirements are clear.

#### **Actions agreed:**

- Verification group to review all units and assessments within NPAs to ensure standardisation and consistency.

## **7. New biomedically focused unit at SCQF level 7**

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

## **8. Applied Sciences: Graded Unit 1 (H91W 34) – revised approach to assessment**

Iain advised of the increase in practitioner workload due to the additional verification required to identify candidate use of AI in Graded Unit 1.

Members discussed various options at length including amendments to the current graded unit, developing a new graded unit and future NextGen: HN development.

### **Actions agreed:**

- Members were asked to submit feedback and proposals for changes to Applied Sciences: Graded Unit 1 (H91W) to Jordan by 31 August.

## **9. Remediation of examination-based assessments**

The Policy team have confirmed remediation cannot be used where a candidate has not attained the required pass mark for exam-based assessments. These candidates must be reassessed using an alternative examination-based assessment. It is possible to only reassess the outcome(s) that the candidate failed to achieve.

Members expressed concerns this is not clear in some Qualifications Scotland documentation. Jonathan has raised these concerns with the Policy team and will request a revision to the Guide to Assessment or a standalone document to clarify Qualifications Scotland's position on remediation and reassessment.

Members were reminded that any policy concerns can also be raised via the Regional Manager or to the Policy team directly.

### **Actions agreed:**

- Jonathan to request a review of policy documentation on remediation and reassessment.

## **10. AOB**

Sandra asked for an update on the review of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) by Cogent Skills for SVQ frameworks. Jonathan advised amendments are being made and will seek a further update from Cogent Skills.

**Actions agreed:**

- Jonathan to request an update from Cogent Skills on the NOS review.

**Next steps**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the science QST would be arranged early September.

**ACTION GRID**

Action	Date completed
Increase assessment duration for Human Body Structure and Function (H92C 35) to 120 minutes.	
Changes to the NC Applied Sciences framework at SCQF Level 5 to be progressed as agreed.	
Microorganisms: Growth, Activity and Significance (F21L 34) and Microbiology: Theory and Laboratory Skills (H92G 34) to be added to a new restricted optional group within the HNC Applied Sciences framework.	
Verification group to review all units and assessments within NPAs to ensure standardisation and consistency.	
Members to submit feedback and proposals for changes to Applied Sciences: Graded Unit 1 (H91W) to Jordan by 31 August.	
Jonathan to request a review of policy documentation on remediation and reassessment.	
Jonathan to request an update from Cogent Skills on the NOS review.	