

Annual Review 2018-19



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Welcome

I am delighted to present the Scottish Qualifications Authority's (SQA) Annual Review to give an overview of our work during 2018-19.

If you work for us or with us, this is an opportunity to see how your hard work fits into the overall picture of our activities and the services we offer.

If you use our services, you will see how we have engaged with students, apprentices, teachers, parents and carers, business people, trainers and various professional bodies over the past year. Our services are there to help you to succeed, wherever you are on your learning journey.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who contribute to the success of SQA's work — our appointees, partners and other stakeholders, and, of course, our own staff. We recognise the vital importance of your support in our successes, and in meeting challenges, and we look forward to continuing our work together in the future.

David Middleton CBE

Chair
Scottish Qualifications Authority



Statement from our Chief Executive

During 2018-19 everyone at SQA worked hard to support learners to realise their potential and achieve their ambitions. We have continued to reinforce the credibility and accessibility of our comprehensive range of globally-recognised qualifications, while harnessing the knowledge and creativity of educators and industry experts to anticipate the needs of the jobs and workplaces of the future.

We are a presence in the lives of people of all ages throughout Scotland and beyond. Our qualifications mark out the stages of learners' journeys, from education and training into further study and progression through employment. In this way, we believe that we contribute to individual success in life, and also benefit society as a whole. We support key public policy goals, such as widening participation, narrowing the attainment gap, and providing the people and businesses of Scotland with the skills that they need for the future.

SQA was delighted to be at the heart of so many events to celebrate the Year of Young People 2018. Through event organisation, sponsorship, and listening to individual stories, we were able to highlight personal successes and significant milestones in so many learning journeys. Evident — throughout the Year of Young People in particular — was the power of recognition and acknowledgement in promoting further achievement. This year's celebrations have provided the

ideal backdrop for SQA's latest advances in Developing the Young Workforce. I am especially proud of our collaboration with Skills Development Scotland to broaden our apprenticeship offering, and of our work in enhancing SQA's vocational qualifications, to ensure that Scotland's newest entrants to the workplace have the skills and experience that employers are looking for.

SQA's Responsible Business ethos runs through the many ways we operate as an organisation, and how we engage with our stakeholders. We want everyone we work with — both inside and outside SQA — to flourish and grow, and are committed to the Fair Work Convention Framework. Our rich variety of volunteering activities, fundraising initiatives and ongoing programmes has a positive impact, not only on staff fulfilment and wellbeing, but on business performance overall.

I hope you enjoy reading about the breadth of our activities during the past year at SQA. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff, and the schools, colleges, training providers, and employers, as well as professional and national bodies, with whom we work to achieve our shared goal of delivering a first-class education and training experience for our learners.

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority



Introduction

This review gives an account of our work over the period April 2018–March 2019. SQA has a privileged role in providing qualifications, not only at secondary school level, but also in further education and vocational contexts. As such, we provide the scaffolding for lifelong learning, and for personal and national progress.

As Scotland's accreditation and awarding body, SQA provides products, services and skills, and training and education — all of which have a positive impact on individuals, organisations, and society. We embed our values — progressive, enabling, and trusted — in all our work.

In the pages that follow, we outline our part in education and training in Scotland and beyond, describe our work with other organisations that help Scotland's learners, and consider the learner journey.

You will read about our involvement in the Year of Young People 2018 celebrations, and our ongoing efforts towards Developing the Young Workforce.

You will learn about updates to our qualifications, improvements in how we work, how we have helped our customers and the community in the past year, and our plans for the future.

Our business is all about people. You will see what SQA colleagues have been doing to improve the learning and training experience for our learners, how they have volunteered to 'give something back' to local communities and those facing the challenges of poverty and exclusion, and how they are maintaining their own work-life balance.



Our objectives

SQA's Strategic Goals set out our aims and aspirations as an organisation. We aim to make a vital contribution to the wellbeing, progress and development of Scottish society as a whole, and of the individuals who form part of it. These objectives cover all aspects of our work, and align with and support Scotland's National Performance Framework. These are the nine Strategic Goals we worked towards during 2018–19. Goal 4, emphasising the importance of communication with our stakeholders, is a new addition for this year.

We aim to continually improve in all our activities. We can do this by listening to learners and those people and organisations who use and are affected by our products and services. We are therefore open to feedback, and are very willing to respond to it.

1. Develop and deliver high-quality qualifications, products and services for the benefit of learners and of Scotland.
2. Provide leadership and expertise in a range of areas including assessment, qualification development and quality enhancement.
3. Support the Scottish Government's internationalisation agenda to maximise the benefits of international engagement and co-operation.
4. Ensure communication and engagement between SQA and our learners, customers and stakeholders is appropriate, clear, timely and tailored to their needs.
5. Deliver high-quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive services to our customers.
6. Ensure our culture and values support the engagement and wellbeing of our staff and foster their commitment to the success of SQA.
7. Continue to develop SQA as a leading public body and key player in the skills, training and education landscape.
8. Continue to pursue a longer-term business model that would enable SQA to reduce its dependency on the public purse, and invest in and improve the education and skills system.
9. Independently accredit, quality assure and regulate approved awarding bodies and qualifications thereby safeguarding the interests of learners, employers, parents, funding bodies, providers and the Scottish Government.

Year of Young People 2018

SQA was uniquely placed to contribute to and celebrate the Scottish Government's Year of Young People in 2018. The aim of this themed year was to give a clearer voice to Scotland's youth, to celebrate their talents and successes, help them to express those abilities, and to foster understanding and respect between generations. We had the opportunity to do all this and more:



Our SHINE exhibition featured a powerful and dynamic selection of arts projects from National 1 and 2 candidates



In winter 2018-19, the Scottish Parliament's main hall housed artwork taken by 26 SQA Higher Photography students.



Inverclyde Academy student Jason McIlroy received the SQA Young Person of the Year Award.



John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills celebrated Results Day with newly qualified young people.



We celebrated inspiring examples of schools and their young people using innovative practice to promote the world of work at the Scottish Education Awards.



Our 2018 Investors in Young People Silver Award recognised our commitment to continuous improvement in developing the young workforce.

Developing the Young Workforce

SQA is committed to helping young people realise their potential and achieve their ambitions, whatever their start in life. The SQA Journeys initiative is our practical response to the Scottish Government's Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) programme. DYW started in 2013 and aims to create high quality, work-relevant education opportunities for young people, and to reduce youth unemployment levels by 40% by the year 2021.



Vocational pathways

DYW is helping to provide young people with the skills they need for the workplace while they are still at school or college. This involves a range of vocational pathways, including introducing Foundation Apprenticeships into the senior phase of school, in partnership with colleges, and with support from regional DYW groups — all of which consider skills needs for local areas and industries.

Building confidence

Staff volunteers ran employability skills workshops with senior pupils in two secondary schools. Pupils were given help to define their competences, and were coached in practical application-writing and interview skills.



Nurturing skills

We recognise the importance of nurturing young people's skills at an early stage. SQA colleagues have worked with and listened to many young people over the past year during activities ranging from mock interviews to tree planting and drama workshops. And the learning is always two-way.

Seeking opinions

We hosted a group of S3 pupils from Renfrew High School who helped us review important exam guidance. During their placement, the young people provided us with invaluable user feedback on these key documents and on the way we engage with younger learners. We will put what we learned from this into our future communications.



Mentoring the next generation

Throughout the year, SQA colleagues continued to support and mentor the five SQA Modern Apprentices on our in-house Pathways programme, as well as 19 secondary school pupils who took advantage of week-long placements in our Glasgow and Dalkeith offices as part of our work experience programme.

Welcoming feedback

SQA welcomed the report of the #SQA Futures panel — a Young Scot volunteer group of 16-18 year olds. The panel presented their views to a number of senior staff, suggesting recommendations for improving future qualifications assessments. The Executive Management Team has endorsed the report and has published SQA's response.

Building vocational skills

Our comprehensive portfolio of qualifications supports a broad range of academic and vocational sectors. SQA is well placed to help prepare young people for the world of work, and to allow students of all ages to hone existing skills or learn new ones. We are finding innovative ways to provide vocational experience and ensure a level of work relevance in many occupations.



SilverNote Music: North East Scotland College

This college-based creative industries network project has enhanced the learning experience of students by offering them work experience in the local community. The project gives budding sound engineers, musicians, film-makers and photographers the opportunity to work together, and with industry experts, to create evidence for their coursework and assessments.



North East Scotland College SilverNote Music students

Apprenticeships

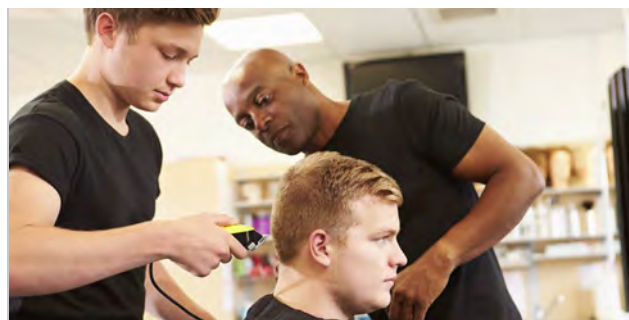
SQA Modern and Foundation Apprenticeships provide a wide range of vocational qualifications to meet local industry requirements. SVQs, drawn up by experts from industry, commerce, and education, are often the key component of Modern and Foundation Apprenticeships, and provide direct access into employment.



The future of apprenticeships and work-based learning

In 2018, SQA and Skills Development Scotland (SDS) formally agreed to work together on the future structure of the apprenticeship family, and build on school-based Foundation Apprenticeships by developing work-based learning at SCQF levels 4 and 5. Along with regulators in Wales and Northern Ireland, this collaboration aims to:

- develop new work-based learning standards which are dynamic, cost-effective and respond to employers' needs
- improve work-based learning progression pathways from the senior phase of school through to apprenticeship at graduate level
- enhance the capability of Scotland's people and economy by developing skills that support the creation of an agile, innovative and resilient workforce, which can adapt to rapid technological changes



Skills framework

Much of SQA's work involves exploring how we can help learners to flourish in the workplaces of the future. We consider how adapted approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, along with employer involvement, can support this. We want the workforce of tomorrow to be more resilient and agile, and to be equipped with higher order skills. Employers of the future will demand greater self-awareness; social intelligence; creativity and innovation; and literacy, including digital literacy and numeracy.

SQA's work with SDS will assess the balance between generic skills required in the 21st century workplace, sector-specific skills, and job-specific skills that would best support learners and businesses to thrive in a rapidly changing and unpredictable future.



SQA Modern Apprentices

We provide the qualifications which support apprenticeships all over Scotland. We believe in the apprenticeship route and, as an employer, we use the Business and Administration Modern Apprenticeship Framework at SCQF level 6 to deliver our own successful programme, Pathways, to nurture our own talent pool. Alongside the input from inhouse assessors and mentors, and using rotation around the organisation, our programme also includes an HNC in Business to equip our young workforce with practical, demonstrable knowledge and skills that give them the confidence to move on to the next stage in their development.

SQA qualifications

SQA is the national accreditation and awarding body in Scotland. This means we develop, maintain and improve a framework of qualifications gained at Scotland's schools, colleges, employers and training providers.

Our qualifications include:

- National Qualifications, studied at schools and colleges, such as National 1 to National 5, Highers, and Advanced Highers
- Higher National Qualifications, often studied at colleges and also offered by universities and some training centres, made up of units which are qualifications in their own right, and which can serve as a bridge to further study at university

As an accrediting body, SQA sets and maintains standards for many other awarding bodies, and for accredited qualifications such as:

- Scottish Vocational Qualifications, which provide evidence that learners can do their jobs well — these can be studied in colleges or in the workplace



National Qualifications

Almost everyone leaving school or college now in Scotland will have one or more of our National Qualifications. They are our most visible and widely recognised qualifications. Results Day each year is therefore a very important day for young people in Scotland.

Our Annual Statistical Report gives details of entries and results for all our qualification types in the 2018 exam diet.

Development of revised National Qualifications

In the past year, SQA has continued to revise assessment in National Qualifications, responding to the direction provided by the Scottish Government in September 2016 to remove assessed units from National 5, Higher, and Advanced Higher courses. We have worked to ensure that course content is still adequately assessed and that standards are maintained.

The academic session 2017–18 was the first year of the revised National 5 qualifications, and revised Higher course specifications were published in April 2018, for delivery in 2018–19. Revised Advanced Higher courses are being delivered in 2019–20.

We are grateful to schools and colleges across Scotland for the ongoing partnership we have with them. Our common goal is to reduce workload for teachers and candidates while maintaining the integrity and credibility of National Qualifications.

We have continued to streamline documentation for NQs, reducing duplication of information across documents and web pages. This makes it easier for users to find what they need.



Vocational qualifications

In addition to NQs, we offer a wide range of qualifications to help people on their individual learning journeys. These include:

- Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)
- Higher National Qualifications (Certificates and Diplomas)
- Skills for Work
- National Certificates (NCs)
- National Progression Awards (NPAs)
- Professional Development Awards (PDAs)

Between April 2018 and March 2019 we issued certificates for 157,292 group awards (eg HNCs, HNDs, and SVQs).

Our wide portfolio of vocational qualifications responds to current and envisaged regional and national skills needs. By providing this, we are supporting the Scottish Government's drive to close the attainment gap. Moreover, these qualifications are fundamental to Developing the Young Workforce, Enterprise and Skills Review and to SQA's Apprenticeship programmes.

New SQA qualifications include HNDs in Web Development, and Stringed Instrument Making and Repair, and nine SVQs in the Food and Drinks sector. New PDAs we developed this year include qualifications in working with girls and vulnerable young women, in breeding and showing horses, and in operating cemeteries.

Our Guide to Scottish Qualifications contains further information on these qualifications and what they could lead to. You can download the guide from our website at: www.sqa.org.uk/qualsguide.

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Our SVQs play a vital role in the world of work. They can provide a pathway to a job, giving employers a guarantee of a new employee's competence, and they can also play a part in regulating and professionalising an area of work.

As in the case of the newly developed SVQ in Rural Land Use and Management, SVQs often arise from an industrial sector's or a professional body's need for a qualification. Many people, including those who left full-time education some time ago, study SVQs in the workplace while carrying out their normal day-to-day job. There are usually no formal written exams, as candidates collect and submit evidence, usually from their own work.



Higher National Qualifications

Higher National Qualifications are developed in partnership with colleges, universities and industry. Higher National Certificates (HNCs) typically take one year to complete, and Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) typically take two. There is a huge range of subjects available at both levels, from Accounting to Video Production. Successful candidates demonstrate both practical skills and the theoretical knowledge to support those skills.

Certain HNCs allow direct entry into the second year of a degree, and some HNDs allow direct entry into third year. SQA has entered into agreements with some professional bodies who recognise HNCs and HNDs as partial fulfilment towards their entry requirements.

SQA works in partnership with Scotland's colleges in meeting the needs of learners, local communities and the wider economy. Our regional managers support our work with colleges, and we work closely with College Development Network and Colleges Scotland to develop vocational qualifications and to meet the aims of the Developing the Young Workforce Youth Employment Strategy.

HNC in Police Studies: a Forth Valley partnership

Young learners in Falkirk are pioneers in a new school-based qualification, which offers a thorough grounding in modern policing. SQA worked with Forth Valley College, Graeme High School, Larbert High School and Police Scotland to develop the Higher National Certificate in Police Studies, which gives S5 and S6 pupils the chance to study aspects of law, criminology and sociology.



Awards

SQA Awards are designed to be as flexible as possible to meet different purposes — which may be broad or specialist — and to satisfy a growing demand for:

- commemorative certification for single-unit qualifications
- specialist qualifications to provide certification for a specific programme
- half- or one-day courses and flexible programmes
- flexible awards for vulnerable learners

At SCQF levels 2 to 6, there are Awards that recognise wider achievement, and develop skills in areas such as employability and citizenship which help learners to succeed.

National Progression Awards (NPAs) (also at SCQF levels 2 to 6) are designed to assess a defined set of skills and knowledge in specialist vocational areas. They are mainly used by colleges in short programmes of study. In 2018, new or revised NPAs included Oral Health Care and Zoo Animal Behaviour and Welfare.

Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are principally designed for those already in a career or vocation who wish to extend, broaden or enhance their skills in a particular area, although some PDAs are designed for those wishing to enter employment. PDAs have specific aims that relate to occupational areas and sit on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework at levels 6 to 12. In 2018, we developed new or revised PDAs in areas that included Family Learning and Engagement, Forestry, and Barbering.



NPA in Cyber Security

Since its launch in 2017, SQA's NPA in Cyber Security has enjoyed spectacular demand, with candidate numbers growing by 40% in 2018. No other school-level course offers learners the chance to study topics like data security, digital forensics, and ethical hacking. The Scottish Government's Cyber Resilience Initiative has made excellent teaching and learning resources available to schools, meaning that the course is now easier to deliver. The demand for skilled individuals who can share their knowledge and experience of cyber security is huge, and they are highly valued. We have now launched the HNC in Cyber Security and the HND will be available for the 2019–20 session.

Skills for Work

Skills for Work courses offer opportunities for learners to acquire critical generic employability skills through a variety of practical experiences linked to a particular vocational area such as construction, hairdressing, and hospitality.



New BSL Awards

Under the Scottish Government's BSL National Plan 2017-23, SQA is developing an initial suite of awards as the basis for BSL qualifications up to SCQF level 6. We have teamed up with the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) to increase the opportunities for deaf and hearing pupils to learn British Sign Language (BSL) at school. In 2018, we launched two new Awards at SCQF levels 3 and 4. Two further Awards at SCQF levels 5 and 6 became available in autumn 2019.

Director of the NDCS in Scotland, Angela Bonomy, said 'Scotland's 3,000 deaf children will now have the opportunity to learn this fantastic language. Schools across Scotland can now partner with us and take an important step towards making their curriculum genuinely inclusive for deaf children.'

Aimed at young learners in schools and colleges, these BSL Awards are similar in length and demand to existing National Courses in Modern Languages. Learners will also develop their understanding of the deaf community, its culture and history. The new Awards have been featured on BBC 2's See Hear programme.

In a first for SQA, the Qualification Design Team, of whom four are deaf and two are hearing, held their meetings fully in BSL.

Users of BSL can now communicate directly with our Customer Contact Centre using the Contact Scotland BSL Service, which uses a fast and secure connection to an online interpreter via devices that support a webcam.

Promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing

With the launch of our Mental Health and Wellbeing Award (SCQF levels 4 and 5), SQA highlights the importance of good mental health, and particularly that of young people. We worked with the Good Shepherd Centre in Renfrewshire, mental health charity, SAMH, and the NHS to develop the qualification. Learning focuses on improving understanding, reducing stigma and misconceptions about mental health, and developing strategies to maintain good mental health. Young people will also benefit from discussions about the impact of social media on their mental health, and how to develop resilience.

We were delighted to present the Good Shepherd Centre with the Innovation Award at the 2018 SQA Star Awards, in recognition of the Centre's role in developing this new award, which has the potential to have a very positive impact on Scotland's young people.

More than 500 students are currently studying these awards, and several new centres are planning to offer the courses next session.

Customised Awards

SQA develops Customised Awards that are tailored to the requirements of particular employers and occupations. We currently have 405 active Customised Awards.

Eco Genics branches out

Eco Genics Ltd is based in Dumfriesshire and offers dry ice blasting and cleaning services. The company wanted to recognise and enhance the skills of its employees and has worked with SQA to develop Customised Awards tailored to the specific needs of the business. The business now boasts three SQA Customised Awards.

Managing Director, Eddie Black, says that having the awards shows clients 'that the Eco group takes competency extremely seriously'.

Global tyre company, Pirelli, is interested in making the qualifications available to its own staff, so Eco Genics could soon be delivering their Customised Awards around the world.

Eco Genics intends to continue upskilling its own workforce — as Eddie Black says, 'We have other processes we would like to qualify, so we will keep working with SQA for a very long time!'.

New Customised Award provides a route to careers in engineering

Civil and Infrastructure Engineering projects: An Overview is a new SQA Customised Award inspired by the A9 Dualling programme, which has been upgrading the main road between Perth and Inverness. The Customised Award, aimed at pupils in S3-S5 in schools along the route of the A9, specifically directs pupils towards STEM careers.

Pupils from Breadalbane Academy in Aberfeldy were the first to undertake this award and received their certificates at a conference in March 2019.

Alistair Wylie, Head of Qualifications — Technology, Engineering, and Construction at SQA, said, 'The qualification gives young people an introduction to the skills and knowledge they will develop, and the opportunities available to them if they pursue a career in civil engineering. I hope to see more schools grasp this opportunity, and offer their pupils an insight into a career in construction.'



Services

SQA provides a number of services for organisations, businesses and governments, including Customised Awards, consultancy, and contracts. These contribute to SQA's fulfilment of Strategic Goals 1 and 2, but have specific relevance to Strategic Goals 8 and 9.

Contract services

As an internationally recognised awarding body and government approved agency, SQA continues to provide a wide range of innovative contract services that respond to specific business and training needs.

SQA helps Capita plc to deliver Key Stage 2 (KS2) marking. The Department for Education's Standards and Testing Agency has awarded SQA a six-year contract. Following a phased implementation and transition, the contract began in September 2019.

Although we are one of a number of consortium members subcontracted by Capita plc to deliver the national curriculum assessments (NCAs), SQA's credibility has helped us to foster a particularly collaborative, transparent and supportive relationship with Capita plc. SQA has appointed a head of service to lead test operations services. The head of service is supported by a strategy and planning team, who have responsibility for the design, development and planning of training and marking activities; and an assessment team, who have responsibility for ensuring that training and marking is delivered within the agreed time and to the required level of quality.

SQA is specifically responsible for providing a structure to recruit and retain markers, training them and assuring the quality of all stages of the process, judging pass/fail thresholds, and for managing review marking and post-results services.



Digital learning

SQA supports the Scottish Government's strategic ambitions for Scotland to be a digital nation by 2020. Our qualifications already include a vast range of digital and IT-related components, but we also ensure that digital learning is accessible and appealing to all.

We are part of the Government's Digital Participation Charter, and subscribe to its aim of giving 'everyone in Scotland the basic digital skills they need to do their jobs, live their lives and confidently use different digital services'. We were proud to sponsor the Education and Training Award at the Scottish Digital Business Awards in October 2018.

Promoting and supporting digital learning is part of our responsible business work, and our Digital Literacy and Engagement Team had plenty to offer during Get Online Week in October, when we encouraged learners of all ages and stages to 'Try 1 Thing' to improve their digital literacy skills.

SQA's free and publicly available range of Digital Learning Guides is a great place for digital novices to start. The guides make navigating some of the most common online tasks a straightforward experience. On completing a selection of the guides, learners receive a digital badge, which confirms their new digital skills.

New stand-alone units in Digital Literacy

SQA is developing new standalone units in Digital Literacy (SCQF levels 2-6). Wherever possible, these highly practical units will also provide learners with the Core Skill of ICT. They will show that learners can make judgements about working securely online and interacting with people through networks. They provide good models of appropriate behaviours and practices in real-life contexts, and should therefore positively affect personal, learning and working environments.



Equalities in qualifications

SQA's Equality Review of Qualifications process ensures that SQA qualifications are not discriminatory for any learner on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics, and that we consider all reasonable adjustments to provide access to our qualifications for disabled learners.

The Scottish Government's Inclusive Education Working Group was established in November 2018 to implement recommendations approved by the Scottish Ministers around LGBT inclusive education. SQA is committed to supporting this, and we are currently exploring the inclusion and assessment of a range of LGBT topics in National Courses.

New PDA in inclusion for educators

SQA has launched a PDA in Advancing Equality and Diversity through Inclusiveness (at SCQF level 9) for staff across the education and training sector. Designed to be delivered as a self-taught course, this award encompasses the changes in equalities legislation, enabling learners to deepen their understanding of inclusiveness and the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010, and how these are reflected in Scottish Government and organisational strategy and policy.

New unit on make-up and hairstyling for trans people

SQA's established framework, HNC/D Make-up Artistry: TV, Film and Theatre award now includes an optional unit titled Make-up and Hair Styling for Trans Clients. This unit, the first of its kind, has been developed in consultation with Stonewall and SQA's Rainbow Network. A representative from Stonewall said, 'I think this is a positive unit which has the potential to impact trans people'.



International engagement

Over the past year, SQA has strengthened its relationships with international partners, organisations and agencies, to enhance our expertise and skills, and ensure that we improve the skills, education and training of our global learners.

Making connections

Our Higher National Qualifications are now available outside of Scotland with a title that is clearer and more meaningful to international centres and students. Since March 2018, the SQA Higher National Diploma (HND) has been known in countries outside of Scotland as the SQA Advanced Diploma, and the SQA Higher National Certificate (HNC) has been known as the SQA Advanced Certificate. The qualification aims, design principles, content, assessment standards and criteria remain the same.

Future of assessment

Digital assessment

Our 'Digital by Default' approach to the use of technology means we are preparing the software and services to support national use of digital assessments now and into the future. Our SOLAR e-assessment service will be the cloud-based platform for digital assessment across our qualifications portfolio. In collaboration with our qualifications teams, we have shown we can deliver positive results. More centres than ever before are using our digital services to support effective formative and summative assessment of our qualifications, with an increase again in the number of qualifications which are digital-only.



Bandara Dissanayaka, accepting the 2018 International Star Award on behalf of Saegis Campus in Sri Lanka, with John McMorris, SQA Director of Business Development.



Representatives of Young Scot's #SQAFutures Panel with SQA staff

Accreditation

As well as providing qualifications itself, SQA has a distinct accreditation function, which is to set and maintain standards for other awarding bodies operating in Scotland, and for accredited qualifications such as SVQs and other licence-to-practise qualifications.

The accreditation function is a separate part of SQA, and is accountable to the Accreditation Committee, established by the Education (Scotland) Act 1996.

At the end of 2018-19, SQA Accreditation had a total of 854 accredited qualifications: 543 SVQs; 31 Regulatory and Licensing qualifications; and 280 other qualifications (such as competence-based qualifications).



Cutting-edge aesthetics

Cosmetic intervention is a growing business in the UK, with non-surgical treatments (like botulinum toxin and dermal fillers) comprising the vast majority of the market. The 2013 Keogh Review into patient safety has led to a demand for professionally qualified practitioners. Following an approach from one of its approved awarding bodies, SQA accredited a qualification in Clinical Aesthetic Injectable Therapies in 2018.

After discussing this qualification with Scottish Government officials, SQA Accreditation joined a Scottish Government working group, which is considering such qualifications for non-clinical staff in the aesthetic sector. In December 2018, SQA Accreditation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Joint Council of Cosmetic Practitioners (JCCP, a voluntary register based in England) that sets out the arrangements for development of qualifications in non-surgical aesthetic treatments. It is hoped that accreditation by SQA will become mandatory for qualifications on the JCCP register, and that these qualifications will become a licence to practise.

Canine health care

The UK is home to an estimated nine million dogs*. The British love for their canine friends coupled with changing lifestyles and financial situations has resulted in a flourishing market for professional dog walkers, day and long-stay care, and grooming. These new businesses, together with the trend for 'humanisation', or human-quality care for pets, has led to an expectation that those who take care of dogs should be trained and qualified in first aid.

These newly accredited practical courses — Emergency First Aid for Dogs and Dog Owners, and First Aid for Dogs and Dog Owners — are based on similar qualifications on offer in the US, and have been developed in line with current UK veterinary practice. The awarding body, ITC First, piloted this idea on a number of candidates before requesting that the course be formalised, assessed and certificated. SQA accredited these qualifications on 12 September 2018.

*Latest available figures from the Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA)

Working together

It's all about what people can do

In this section, we show some of the impact that taking a committed approach to responsible business and fair work has on our working culture and SQA's business. We detail some of the differences this makes to our staff, our stakeholders, our wider community, and the environment.



Photo: SQA staff supporting the 2018 Lifetime of Love Rally, part of Care Experienced Week

Responsible business

At SQA, Responsible Business is so much more than a business department — it's a way of working that we purposefully weave through all that we do. We aim to create positive changes and make valuable contributions that support our staff, the people we support, our local communities and our environment. Engaging with all our stakeholders — our own colleagues, learners, teachers, lecturers, trainers, co-ordinators and appointees — is key to SQA making a positive difference as a responsible public body.

We work closely with several organisations to support young people who may have been disadvantaged socially and educationally when growing up.

SQA is a National Corporate Parent; we have a close relationship with Who Cares? Scotland and work hard to effect real change for care-experienced young people in Scotland. In 2018, we achieved the Investors in Young People Silver Award, which recognises our commitment to continuous improvement in developing the young workforce. We support young people through SQA's own Pathway Apprenticeship Scheme, and offer work experience for S4 learners.

With a strong focus on mentoring and learning, SQA staff share their experiences of life, work and skills with young people who need that extra help and support. We work closely with a number of bodies including Career Ready, Scottish Business in the Community, MCR Pathways, Project Scotland, Volunteer Scotland, Inspiring 500, and charitable bodies including the Cyrenians, the Bethany Christian Trust and Volunteer Midlothian.



SQA staff supporting Who Cares? Scotland on the 2018 Kiltwalk



Deputy First Minister John Swinney MSP celebrating 2018 Results Day with care-experienced young people

Fair Work Framework

SQA has adopted the Fair Work Framework. This Scottish Government initiative envisages that, by 2025, ‘people in Scotland will have a world-leading working life, where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations, and society’. Our commitment to the Convention aims to support the engagement and wellbeing of our staff, and foster their commitment to SQA’s success. This means we believe that fair work offers:



Fair work dimension	What we're doing	In the pipeline
Effective voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust consultation process via recognised trades unions • Policy review programme • Staff surveys • Board focus on staff interests • HR key performance indicators • Change management function • Short life working groups • Staff network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a new performance review/appraisal process
Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern Apprenticeships and internships • Equalities training • Transparent and robust recruitment process • Internal secondments • Training budget for all staff • Coaching programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accredited opportunities with the Civil Service Commission • Line manager and leadership development • Graduate Apprenticeship programme • Promotion of equality data • Empowering of recruiting managers with the right tools • Capability building
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trades union agreements • Flexible working policies • Scottish Living Wage • Transparent pay policies • Pension scheme which exceeds average employer contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change Programme • Job evaluation review • Review of staff patterns of work • Guaranteed development of our people
Fulfilment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy for individual staff • ‘Golden thread’ — a link between individual objectives and corporate goals • Staff networks • SVQ programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line manager and leadership development
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embodying our values — trusted, progressive and enabling • Employee networks, run for and by staff • Strong focus on equality • Conflict procedures, safe environment to raise concerns • Health and wellbeing initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Positive Employer Initiative

Developing and supporting our staff

In addition to our HR support and organisational development policies, we have a wide range of programmes and initiatives to support, train and reward our colleagues, to help them support each other, and to provide practical guidance in achieving a good 'work-life balance'.

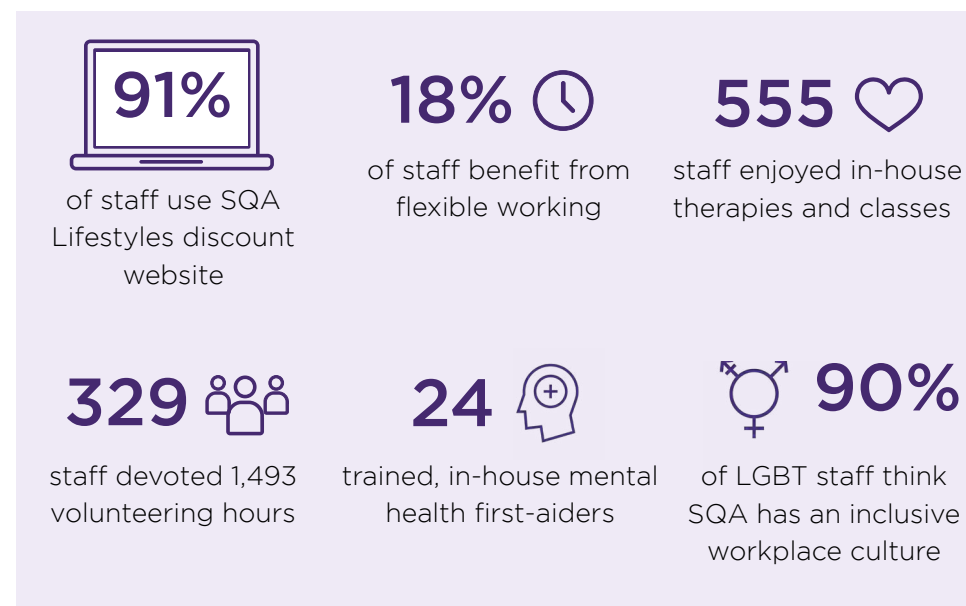
SQA's Responsible Business Annual Review 2018 explains in detail how SQA looks after its employees, how it supports its employee network groups, and what SQA staff do to help each other. As part of a new support service, colleagues can seek help from one of 24 trained, in-house mental health first-aiders.

HR Shared Service

The HR Shared Service, launched in February 2018, provides a central point for all HR advice and guidance enquiries. Contacting and getting help from HR is now easier, and the service is more accessible for all staff. This was confirmed by our January 2019 survey, in which respondents indicated that there was a good standard of customer service, with 75% of all issues being concluded within five days. We have made improvements in response to comments in the survey, and the Hub is now easier to use. We also launched HR Ivanti, a new secure digital channel dealing with individual queries, which provides regular automated updates. The HR Hub has had in excess of 85,000 visits and has now been accessed by every member of staff.

Fundraising

SQA colleagues in our Optima and Lowden offices nominate two charities once every two years, and colleagues devote a considerable amount of their time, imagination, energy and goodwill to many fundraising initiatives and events. In the year to the end of March 2019, Optima staff had raised more than £5,800 for the Scottish Association for Mental Health, while Lowden colleagues had raised more than £2,600 for the British Heart Foundation.



Volunteering

We encourage our colleagues to volunteer their time for practical volunteering activities. Staff can use 21 office hours each year to do this, and individual efforts are acknowledged in staff performance management reviews. In 2018, 329 staff made use of their designated time to volunteer for a wide range of activities that spanned over 40 events — from paired reading schemes to providing food to homeless people — and amounted to a total of 1,493 volunteering hours.

Equality in the workplace

Building on an already established momentum, SQA continues to drive for equality of opportunity, and a respectful and inclusive culture through our policy development, and the way we work, and various awareness-raising events. According to our equal pay audit of February 2019, SQA's gender pay gap is 3.7%, which is below Scotland's overall level.

Our Rainbow Network, which promotes the inclusion and visibility of our LGBTQI+ staff, celebrated its first anniversary in 2018 and implemented a formal network structure. We invited Stonewall Scotland to lead several staff information sessions on appropriate LGBT terminology and trans awareness.

Rising through the Stonewall WEI

The Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI) measures an employer's performance and progress on LGBT inclusion in the workplace. In the last WEI in 2018, SQA had climbed 133 places, to 212 out of 434 UK companies who took part in the WEI.

Some 258 staff responded to Stonewall Scotland's Employee Feedback Survey (21 employees identified as LGBT), in which 90% of SQA LGBT staff, and 94% of non-LGBT staff agreed that the workplace culture in SQA was inclusive of gay men and women.

Emotionally intelligent networks

The year 2018 saw the emergence of two new employee networks in SQA. In November, we launched our Women's Network, which now has more than 50 members. More than 100 colleagues attended the Network's International Women's Day event on 8 March, to celebrate the careers of women from across the business, and hear some of their candid and inspiring stories. SQA is also a Disability Confident Employer, and in 2018 we inaugurated our Disability Network. It aims to provide a welcoming environment for discussion, to foster constructive knowledge sharing and promote disability-smart practice within and beyond the organisation.



SQA Rainbow Network staff supporting Glasgow Pride



SQA Women's Network staff supporting International Women's Day

Appointee engagement

SQA's work necessarily involves harnessing the skills, expertise, and time of many education professionals and specialists outside of the organisation. We are enormously grateful to these external appointees, who play many vital roles in the delivery and quality assurance of all SQA qualifications. People may be familiar with the concept of external markers and invigilators for National Qualifications, but we also have appointees doing a range of other tasks, including recording scripts, reviewing and modifying question papers to ensure accessibility for visually impaired candidates, and creating and drawing maps for use in assessments.

In the 2018 exam diet there were 6,800 professionals who wrote, produced, quality assured, and marked NQ assessments and question papers; 6,950 invigilators; 703 non-marker appointees.

For our HN qualifications and SVQs, there are roles for course assessors and verifiers, who ensure centres are delivering and assessing qualifications to the required standard.

The vocational nature of many HNs, and particularly of SVQs, demands that these qualifications maintain a rigorous compliance with industry standards. We therefore appoint experienced practitioners as verifiers to ensure that centres are delivering and assessing qualifications to the required standard.



Enabling our customers and communities

As a responsible business, we work hard to make new relationships, and to strengthen existing ones. This ethos and our unique role in society has given us the opportunity to acknowledge and reward ambition, promote equality and actively support local charities. The Year of Young People 2018 provided a perfect opportunity to underline our commitment to helping young people realise their potential and achieve their ambitions, whatever their start in life.

Corporate parenting

SQA is proud to have made more tangible steps in supporting Scotland's care-experienced young people. These include fewer exam timetable clashes with Children's Hearings, free replacement certificates for many care-experienced young people, and the inclusion of care-experienced scenarios in some of our qualifications. At SQA, new and existing staff receive corporate parenting training through SQA Academy to raise awareness and understanding.

We have a special relationship with Who Cares? Scotland, and joined with them and MCR Pathways to host SQA's fourth Results Day celebration. The Christmas Campaign in 2018 brought together 65 SQA volunteers to handwrite 1,800 Christmas cards.

Copies of our ***SQA is proud to be a corporate parent*** report were inserted into every Who Cares? Scotland Speak Out magazine, received by 1,800 care-experienced young people, and feedback was very positive.

SHINE exhibition

Our SHINE exhibition showcased the creativity of National 1 and National 2 candidates, who require additional support in their learning. SHINE toured venues in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen in November 2018 and featured a powerful and dynamic selection of artwork, creative writing, music, and multimedia projects by school and college learners across Scotland. SQA provides a fully inclusive framework of qualifications for young people, and this exhibition demonstrated the opportunities to recognise the attainment of every individual.

Higher Vision

During winter 2018-19, the Scottish Parliament's main hall housed some of the best images taken by 26 SQA Higher Photography students from schools and colleges all over Scotland. The exhibition provided a unique insight into life in Scotland, including subjects from Scotland's diverse landscapes and environment, to portraits of people important to the photographers' lives.



Cameron Ross — Higher Vision

Star Awards

SQA's annual Star Awards celebration is always an inspiring evening of personal and education success stories. In honour of the Year of Young People 2018, SQA inaugurated a new award — Young Person of the Year — to recognise young people up to age 26 who have embraced the themes of the Year of Young People in their pursuit of SQA qualifications.



Leah Cairns — nominee

At 14, Leah was disengaged at school, and was referred to Glasgow Kelvin College's Transitions to Learning and Work programme. She thrived there, and is now a Modern Apprentice in Youth Work, heading towards an SVQ in Youth Work at SCQF level 6. She supports the daytime Transitions programme she completed, and is a great role model for the new intake of young people on the programme.



Niamh Curren — nominee

Niamh is an HND Graphic Design student at Edinburgh College, and has been an ambassador for design to Edinburgh schools. She challenges the idea that college is second-best to university, and champions careers in the creative industries. Niamh's drive and determination has seen her scoop awards, deliver talks to peers, and travel abroad to develop her creativity and inspire the creative minds of the future.



Jonathan Marshall — nominee

Jonathan missed most of his primary school years due to a brain condition. Despite this, and showing huge effort and sheer determination, he went on to gain excellent qualifications at Clydeview Academy, Gourrock, then a place on a master's degree course in Primary Teaching — and all while learning to walk again. During his time at Clydeview, he was Depute Head Boy, took part in concerts, and saw through his SQA Leadership Award.



Jason McIlroy — winner

Jason found the structure and discipline of school difficult, and was referred to Inverclyde Council's Youth Work Services team in his first year at Inverclyde Academy. He thrived there, and went on to gain the Dynamic Youth Award, John Muir Award and Saltire Award. This encouraged him to take up community placements, including one at Belville Community Garden, which led to an SQA Award in Volunteering Skills, in recognition of his leadership qualities. He will now undertake SQA Awards in Leadership and Community Achievement in sixth year.

Improving communications

We prioritise clarity and conciseness in our communications. We seek feedback — face-to-face whenever possible — from teaching and management staff, representatives from industry bodies and trades unions, and from government and other national bodies like Education Scotland, Skills Development Scotland, and the National Parent Forum Scotland. We have used their comments to streamline qualifications development and course documentation, and to improve the ways we communicate with them, and with learners.

A programme of continuous improvement takes place across our digital channels, which has included changes to key sections of our website based on user feedback, and improvements to unit searches and overall site searches.

We have expanded the ways we use digital technologies to engage with people and to enhance our products and services. These now include a tailored alerts service, subject-specific blogs, additional information on Understanding Standards, comprehensive details on changes to assessment, and regular development updates through Facebook, Twitter LinkedIn and YouTube.

Online with Alexa

We have increased our support for exam candidates through the Alexa virtual assistant. Candidates can now find out the dates for the exam diet by 'asking Alexa', and they can receive support on how to find the right study style for them through a unique Alexa Skill.

In addition to the activity summarised below, we now have a communication-focused Strategic Goal for 2018–21: to 'ensure communication and engagement between SQA and our learners, customers and stakeholders is appropriate, clear and timely and tailored to their needs'.

Stakeholder survey 2018

We monitor stakeholder satisfaction each calendar year using targeted surveys. This helps us to assess the effectiveness of our services, and our efficiency in dealing with customers and complaints. This past year's findings show that our stakeholders have a high regard for SQA, and for our qualifications.

Perception of credibility

92%

were aware of SQA

81%

rated its credibility as 'high'

Highest credibility: Highers (91%), HNCs/HNDs (87%), National 5s (up five percentage points to 87%), SVQs (81%) and Advanced Highers (75%) 51% perceived National 4s as credible.

SQA Values

90%

believe SQA is
trusted



70%

believe SQA is
progressive



75%

believe SQA is
enabling



Keeping staff in the loop

We aim to ensure that SQA staff have a clear understanding of our Strategic Goals and how our individual efforts contribute to achieving these goals. The most recent staff survey, conducted in early 2017, found that 86% of respondents agreed that they understood how their work contributed to SQA's corporate strategies and goals. Channels of communication include:

- quarterly 'All Staff Briefings' from our Chief Executive, attended by over 330 staff
- smaller, more frequent informal meetings where staff can discuss issues affecting their work with the Chief Executive
- our Staff Information Programme of regular presentations and workshops where staff from across SQA inform others about their work — on average, there are four topics per month, each attended by 20–30 staff
- twice-yearly performance management reviews, where managers discuss objectives and performance with their staff
- two monthly newsletters, Business Inform and Social Inform, to keep staff up to date with corporate and social news — Business Inform is viewed by about 700 people, while Social Inform is viewed by 550
- the HR Team, which works closely with SQA's two recognised trades unions to develop policy, hear staff concerns, and find appropriate solutions
- a suggestion box for staff to submit ideas for improving processes, addressing environmental concerns, and other issues which affect their working lives

Understanding Standards

The Understanding Standards programme supports the teachers and lecturers delivering SQA qualifications. We publish regularly updated materials to accompany our Understanding Standards events. These examples of candidate evidence and commentaries explain why the evidence has, or has not, met the required standards. This year we published evidence and commentaries for 98 National Courses.

The period 2018–19 was the first year of the new National 5 courses, and brought a lot of fresh candidate evidence. As a result, the Understanding Standards Team ran 123 events for 6,545 delegates — almost twice the figure for the previous year — to support teachers and lecturers with these new courses, and with revised requirements for Highers.

In their post-event evaluations, delegates noted that the experience had increased their confidence, provided clarity and new information, and had given them networking and idea-sharing opportunities.



Engaging with teachers and lecturers

Co-ordinators

Meaningful engagement with SQA co-ordinators — schools' and colleges' nominated individuals for liaison with SQA — is crucial to effective assessment. In the period under review, we held five co-ordinators' conferences (one each in Edinburgh, Dundee and Inverness, and two in Glasgow), which were attended by 325 co-ordinators.

At the 2018 School Co-ordinator Conferences, we invited delegates to give us feedback on their operational experiences and communications relating to the delivery of National Qualifications. As a result, we received very useful feedback which enabled us to enhance a number of systems and processes. These included improving the capability of our SQA Connect service as a single point for data reports, creating and further refining resources such as a ready-reckoner for extra time in exams, and changing processes to improve stationery supplies.

We are continuing to work on further suggestions made at the conferences and are exploring how we can improve our communications with centres.

Quality Focus Group

The SQA/College Quality Focus Group brings representatives from each of the college regions together with colleagues from SQA to discuss issues which may affect the quality of National and Higher National Qualifications. The group meets five or six times a year and holds an annual event for quality managers from the sector. Discussions are open and allow a forum for potential developments and changes to be considered, and for feedback to be gathered and acted on.

Co-ordinators said... SQA did...



We don't like the Info Centre platform

We made it possible to deliver reports via SQA Connect, and closed Info Centre



Can we have more information on assessment arrangements?

We held three information events in December 2018



Can we have more guidance on using the Assessment Arrangements Request (AAR) system?

Our Liaison Team is providing advice and support



We didn't have enough brown envelopes or postage labels last time

We set up a new process to ensure all centres have enough supplies



Can we have more support for new co-ordinators?

Our Liaison Team is making induction visits



Can you make Centre News a bit better?

We are revising this newsletter, based on co-ordinator feedback

Sponsorship

SQA regularly sponsors external events and projects to build partnerships and promote relationships that improve education across Scotland, and to support learners and learning in all sectors.

We sponsored the Essential Skills Award at the 2018 College Development Network College awards. This recognises colleges that have made great strides or innovations in the delivery of the soft, transferrable skills that help students to reach their full potential.

We were a Partner Sponsor of the 2018 Glasgow Pride Parade for the second year running, and at The Herald Diversity Awards 2018. We again sponsored the Diversity in the Third Sector Award, which acknowledges the excellent work taking place in social enterprises to promote diversity.

Lantra Scotland's Land-based and Aquaculture Learner of the Year Awards 2019 celebrated learning opportunities in rural Scotland. SQA sponsored the Modern Apprentice of the Year Award once more — showcasing how SQA Modern Apprentices are embracing the chance to gain qualifications, use their skills to develop rural industries, and ensure the future of the sector.

We sponsored the Skills for Life category at the YouthLink Scotland Awards in March 2019. This acknowledges the life-changing efforts that are taking place in youth work every day throughout Scotland.

The annual Learning Disability Awards help to share the stories and achievements of people with learning disabilities and those who support them. SQA sponsored a new Enterprise category in 2018, and presented the award to Shetland-based social enterprise, COPE Ltd.

SQA supported TEDxYouth@Glasgow — a unique conference designed by and delivered for young people.

As part of our engagement with apprenticeship schemes, we sponsored the Large Employer of the Year award at the 17th Scottish Apprenticeship Awards. This award recognises the apprenticeship schemes of businesses with 250 or more employees.

At the 2018 Volunteer Midlothian annual awards ceremony, SQA sponsored and presented the Volunteer Manager of the Year Award to Paula Jackson for her work at Midlothian's Transform Project.



TEDxYouth@Glasgow 2018 conference



Left: Winners of the 2018 Herald Diversity in the Third Sector Award, The Scottish Centre for Personal Safety, with Steve Borley, SQA Head of Strategic Planning and Governance
Right: National Youth Work Awards Skills for Life winner, Helm Training

Planning for the future

The SQA Change Programme

The SQA Change Programme aims to improve the way we deliver our services and the support we provide to those we work with both inside and outside SQA. In the past year, we have been steadily laying the foundations for more robust, effective, and reliable operations, in line with SQA's aim to be 'digitally ready' for the future, and the Scottish Government's Digital First initiative. We have begun to modernise and future-proof our IT and finance systems.

Much of our planning seeks to meet the assessment demands of the future. For example, our Assessment Futures Team is researching how we might assess an individual's capacity to adapt to change, and other skills that will be important in the jobs of the future.

SQA continues to invest in technology for the benefit of its staff and customers. 1 March 2019 saw the introduction of a brand new intranet site, and preparations are underway to roll-out the latest version of Microsoft Office 365 across SQA in the period 2019-20.

Organisational development and change tools

SQA's Organisational Development (OD) and Change Management Team has produced a number of toolkits to support departments and managers in developing their teams and in planning.

Already in regular use, the Change Management Toolkit helps teams communicate the case for change, identify and address concerns, and plan for likely impacts of change. The Organisation Design toolkit, which was developed with business and trades union colleagues, helps teams to define the changes they need to make to do better in the future. Meanwhile, the staff induction programme has been redesigned to provide an introduction to SQA's culture, values and activities, and thus help give new starts the knowledge and tools to contribute to achieving our corporate goals.

The new performance tool, MyReview, is a feature of our new enterprise resource planning system, and focuses on developing staff and realising their potential.



Environmental performance

Carbon emissions

As a responsible business, we seek to minimise our contribution to global warming, and we work hard to reduce our carbon emissions. In April 2018, we published the latest review of our Carbon Management Plan, which assesses our progress in reducing emission levels against targets, and explains how our carbon management efforts bring savings and other benefits to SQA.

Staff volunteers from both offices took part in a tree-planting event at the Royal High School in Edinburgh, where they helped pupils from the school to plant 200 trees in the grounds. We paired this with investment in an avoided deforestation scheme in the Amazon rainforest, and this guaranteed a carbon offset of 200 tonnes of CO₂.

In 2018-19, we once again reduced our carbon emissions, this time by 9% over the previous year's 1,249 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e). In our Carbon Management Plan 2015-19, we committed to maintaining our carbon emissions at or below the level of the baseline year 2013-14, or 1,643 tCO₂e. Accordingly, our 2018-19 figure of 1,137 tCO₂e is a remarkable 31% reduction below this base line level.

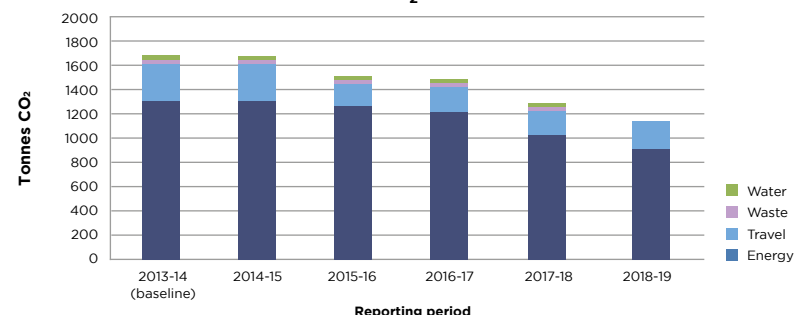
Recycling

In the past year, SQA has focused its environmental communications and initiatives to staff on reducing unnecessary waste — particularly single-use plastic. We aim to put as little of our waste as possible in landfill. The majority of SQA's waste is now recycled in some way, as the figures for 2018-19 show.

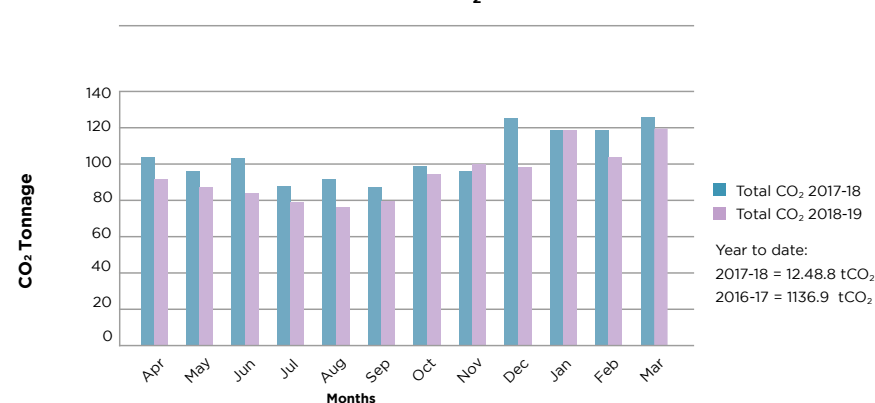
Food waste is sent for anaerobic digestion, and converted into biogas and fertiliser. Most of our other non-recyclable waste serves as refuse-derived fuel, which goes to waste-fuelled power plants. As a result, only a small amount of residual waste is sent to landfill.

All SQA's own IT equipment is recycled when it is no longer of use to us, and up to 75% of the materials can be reused. This is done by local social enterprise, Haven Recycle, who provide employment to disabled and disadvantaged adults.

Yearly CO₂ statistics



Total in-scope CO₂ output



Waste	Total (kg)	% of all waste
Confidential recycling	62,627	55%
Dry mixed recycling	15,610	14%
General waste (non-recycled)	28,474	25%
Food waste	7,280	6%

Last word

In light of the Year of Young People 2018, it seems fitting to hear from some of our young colleagues at SQA:



**Anna,
Events Servicing**

'Working in different placements has given me the opportunity to see my skill set grow and realise what I'm capable of doing. I really enjoyed participating in the employability skills volunteering workshop and getting a chance to help pupils at our centres — I really think it helped to build their confidence.'



**Cameron,
Assessment Arrangements**

'A highlight of 2018 for me was helping to judge the Star Awards Young Person of the Year. It was great to see the positive impact that these young people had had on their schools and communities.'



**Eve,
Data Governance**

'We took part in an assessment future workshop where we spoke about technology and what the future holds for exams, this gave us the perfect platform to showcase our ideas on the subject.'



**Lauren,
OD and Change Management**

'Volunteering at a high school was such a rewarding experience. I let the pupils know all about my experiences as a Modern Apprentice and the new skills I have developed along the way. I wanted to help them to believe in themselves.'