

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT – 4 NOVEMBER 2009

For approval

Minutes of the fifty-eighth meeting of the Board of Management held at 12.30pm
Wednesday 30 September 2009 in Esk/Forth, the Optima Building, Glasgow.

Members

- * Mr G Houston (Chairman)
- * Dr J Brown (Chief Executive)
- * Mr A Cassidy
- * Mr J Edgar
- Mr W Gallagher
- * Prof A MacLennan
- * Mr K McKay
- * Mrs M Nicol
- * Mr G Rodgers
- * Prof J Simmons
- * Mrs S Walsh

Officers

- * Ms M Cahill
- * Mr R Gibson
- * Ms K McCallum
- * Mr J McDonald
- * Mr G Moodie
- * Ms J Ross
- * Dr G Stewart

Observers

- Mr L Cousins, Audit Scotland
- Mr C MacLean, Scottish Government
- Ms L Ribchester, Audit Scotland

* indicates present

58/1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting, including Mr McKay to his first meeting of the Board, and Mr MacLean from the Scottish Government.

A welcome was also extended to Mr Lee Cousins and Ms Liz Ribchester from Audit Scotland, who were present as part of the Audit Scotland study to assess the role and effectiveness of the boards of public bodies.

Apologies were received from Mr Gallagher.

58/2 DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

58/3 PREVIOUS MEETING

i Minutes of meeting held on 12 August 2009

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

ii Action Grid

The contents of the action grid were noted.

58/4 MATTERS ARISING

Any matters arising would be covered in the course of the agenda.

58/5 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman reported that he had recently met with Leslie Evans, new Director General of Education and Life Long Learning, and that they had had an encouraging discussion around the potential for Board partnerships between SQA and other NDBPs in order to share and address similar challenges.

He had also attended a Chairs conference on the implementation of Diversity Delivers, where there was consideration of the proposals and recommendations to promote an equal opportunities strategy for public appointments in Scotland.

58/6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Dalkeith Accommodation

Dr Brown advised on the recent communication from the Scottish Government around the Dalkeith accommodation. The Board was assured that robust programme planning would be in place to manage and ensure the operational stability of SQA within the necessary timescales. It was agreed that the overall governance and risk management arrangements would be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

58/7 DELIVERY OF NEW QUALIFICATIONS

i SQA Risk Review

The Board considered the Deloitte report that presented an independent high level assessment of SQA's state of preparedness to implement Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). The Executive Management Team was in the process of reviewing the findings for management response.

There was unanimous consent that the report should reflect the current operational efficiencies within SQA, with particular reference to the significant programmes of work that had been delivered through effective programme planning. It was agreed to recommend a revised text to Deloitte, and that this would be drafted and circulated to members for comment.

The final report would be presented to the Board in November.

ii CfE Governance Arrangements

Dr Stewart presented the governance structures for the development and implementation of the new National Qualifications. In the course of discussion it was noted that:

- There were a number of dependencies on SQA's work to other parts of the CfE programme and with other partners and stakeholders. Clarity was required around the accountability of any slippages in workstreams, and mitigating actions that would be taken. Mr MacLean advised that the CfE Management Board would take collective responsibility and accountability to work with stakeholders and partners to ensure that any areas for concern were addressed.

- The Board was firm in the overriding need for the Scottish Government to establish clear ownership, visibility and detailed programme management arrangements. The current high level plan should be expanded, moving from the policy to the implementation phase.
- The governance relationship between the SQA Qualifications Committee, SQA Board and the CfE Management Board required further clarification.
- The CfE Management Board should have a long term plan in place that highlighted all challenges and interdependencies across stakeholders and partners in Scotland.
- In the case of qualifications design, the CfE Management Board would take collective responsibility for the programme management, with the management and delivery of the qualification resting with SQA.

The Board requested regular updates on this and that any issues regarding Governance should be brought to their attention.

58/8 OPERATIONAL UPDATE

i Report from Certification Planning Group

The Board noted the progress made on certification planning, monitoring and reporting.

58/9 FINANCE AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

i Draft Corporate Plan 2010-13

The draft corporate plan had been amended slightly to show that goals 1 to 5 were applicable to the awarding function, goal 6 to the accreditation function and goals 7, 8 and 9 germane across the organisation. A fully articulated plan and budget would be presented to the Board for approval in December.

Prof Simmons advised that following discussion at the Accreditation Committee, it had been agreed to restate corporate action 6.3 such that it would read "Work with Sector Skills Councils and Skills Development Scotland to support Awarding Bodies in the identification and promotion of progression pathways for accredited qualifications".

The draft corporate plan was approved subject to the above amendment.

ii Update on QPR Process

Mr Moodie presented an update on progress with the new quarterly performance reporting to the Board, Committees and the Scottish Government. The content and appropriate reporting mechanisms would be considered by the Audit Committee in November.

iii Financial Report to 5 months YTD

Mr Moodie presented a summary of the income and expenditure accounts for the year to 31 August 2009. This new form of report provided the Board with a high level summary on overall financial performance, along with a reassurance that the full year plan should be achievable. The current

financial position was reported at £830k favourable, of which half could be attributed to timing issues. This was noted by the Board.

At this point, it was clarified that the trading subsidiary business case was currently with the Scottish Government and that it was hoped to provide the Board with an update at the next meeting.

58/10 **CONTRACT APPROVALS**

i Courier Services Contract

The Board approved the framework contract for courier services. The new contract would commence 1 November for a period of three years.

i TranSETT Contract

The Board approved the framework of suppliers to support eAssessment delivery for a period of two years.

58/11 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

i Accreditation Committee held on 1 September 2009

The minutes had not been available for inclusion in the Board papers. Prof Simmons provided an overview of the business covered.

ii Advisory Council held on 11 August 2009

The minutes of the last Advisory Council meeting were enclosed and noted.

iii Audit Committee held on 2 September 2009

The minutes of the last meeting of the Audit Committee were enclosed and noted.

iv International and Commercial Committee held on 8 September 2009

The draft minutes of the last meeting of the International and Commercial Committee were enclosed and noted.

v Qualifications Committee held on 23 June 2009

A verbal report had been provided to the last meeting of the Board. The approved minutes were enclosed and noted.

vi Qualifications Committee held on 25 September 2009

The minutes had not been available for inclusion in the Board papers. Mrs Nicol advised on the business of the meeting.

58/12 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no matters raised.

The guidance letter from the Minister for Schools and Skills was circulated to the Board for information.

58/13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Management would be held on Wednesday 4 November in the Boardroom, Dalkeith.