

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT – 26 AUGUST 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Management held at 1.45 pm on Thursday 30 July 2020 by video conference.

Members

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

Officers

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

Observers

Ms A Kerr, Committee Manager
Mr M Ware, Head of Transformational Change
Mr S Borley, Head of Strategic Planning & Governance

* Indicates present on the call

1 OPENING REMARKS**1.1 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting including Martyn Ware, Head of Transformational Change and Steve Borley, Head of Strategic Planning and Governance. He noted that apologies had been received from Dr Mayne.

1.11 Declaration of Any Conflicts of Interest

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

Whilst not a conflict of interest, it was acknowledged that Mr Hagney and Dr Thomson held an interest through their positions as Heads of Centre. Furthermore, it was noted that Ms Craig, Ms Davis and Mr Hagney had children studying at National 5 and Higher levels. The Chair noted that members of the Board would never be put in a position directly to affect the outcomes relating to their centres or family members.

1.12 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Board meeting on 9 July 2020 were approved as an accurate record.

The Board acknowledged the section of addition to minutes of 25 June that had been circulated to them ahead of the meeting and approved them for inclusion.

1.13 **Matters Arising**

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

1.2 **Chair's Update**

The Chair updated the Board briefly on the meeting he had attending earlier that day with the Deputy First Minister and the Chief Executive.

2 **AWARDING 2020**

2.1 **Chief Examining Officer's Report**

The Chief Executive opened with an update that the data sharing process for 2020 results with the Scottish Government, Local Authorities, schools, and colleges was already in train, which the Board duly noted.

She went on to present the draft 2020 Chief Examining Officer's Report, noting that the report represented a summary of 2020 awarding from a Chief Examining Officer's perspective.

The Chief Executive led the Board through the report, including a reminder of the high-level outcomes, and the impact of moderation on outcomes.

The Board welcomed the report.

2.2 **SQA National Qualifications 2020 Awarding – Methodology Report**

Dr Stewart presented the methodology report to the Board, outlining that the report laid out the approach to 2020 awarding, building on the research and evidence materials that the Board had seen in May. She explained that this detailed report included further information on the technical approach to awarding 2020, estimate accuracy and moderation and high-level outcomes of moderation itself. The issues contained in the report had previously been discussed with the Board.

The Board again welcomed sight of the report and discussed its importance. Whilst cognisant of the unprecedented nature of 2020, the Board acknowledged and agreed that moderation had been essential to maintain standards of qualifications and ensure attainment in 2020 is of equal value to previous years. The appeals process was an important final step to awarding. A question was raised about how queries or anomalies on individual results would be handled. As previously discussed with the Board, a post certification review process was in place if the centre wished to query a grade – and this was seen as a central part of the process this year. The review process would be evidence based and individualised to learners.

In closing, the Board commended the report, in particular the level of detailed information provided and agreed it was important to note their thanks to teachers across Scotland for the estimates that had allowed certification to take place.

2.3 Equality Impact Assessment

The Board welcomed Mr Borley, Head of Strategic Planning and Governance, to the meeting and he went on to present the draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) that had been compiled on the end-to-end awarding process for 2020 and served to demonstrate SQA's compliance with their statutory obligations. Mr Borley noted that positive engagement through businesses, key stakeholder and the Equality and Human Rights Commission had all contributed to the compilation of the presented document.

Drawing the Board's attention to the statistical analysis Mr Borley also highlighted the areas of data that SQA did not hold due to lack of requirement for the means of awarding but noted that work was underway with the Scottish Government to do further analysis on data held by them that SQA could map to.

The Board duly noted the EQIA, commenting that it was a comprehensive report that provided assurance on compliance with legal obligations.

2.4 Children's Rights Impact Assessment

The Board noted with approval the draft Children's Rights Impact Assessment as presented and agreed that all reports that had been presented would give confidence to the wider system that SQA had fulfilled their obligations.

2.5 Delivery Assurance

Ms Blair provided a brief update on delivery, stating that the process was on track for certification on 4 August 2020. With the focus now on the Post Certification Review (PCR) process, she confirmed that the PCR system would go live on 4 August with the planning now at the advanced stages and close monitoring underway to ensure plans would meet demand.

The Board noted the update and it was agreed a more detailed PCR overview would be brought to a future Board.

3 WHO CARES? SCOTLAND: RESULTS DAY UPDATE

Ms Mahmoud provided a brief update on the annual event held with Who Cares? Scotland to celebrate young people's achievements, noting that circumstances dictated a different approach for this year. This would see a digital video of congratulations going out to all young people involved with Who Cares? Scotland that would include a message from the Chief Executive along with various colleagues from SQA sending their congratulations and well wishes.

Ms Mahmoud highlighted that 2020 cohort of students would also be invited to be a part of the celebration event in 2021, circumstances allowing.

The Board noted this update with approval.

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In closing the meeting, the Chair recorded his thanks to all staff whose work had contributed to delivering qualifications for 2020. He then thanked members for their time and contribution to the discussions, noting that the Board would meet again on Wednesday 26 August 2020.