

## SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

B139/1.12 v

### BOARD OF MANAGEMENT – 1 SEPTEMBER 2021

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Management held at 10am on Monday 2 August 2021 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
- ██████████
- \* Dr G Stewart
- Mrs D Mahmoud
- \* Ms B Black
- \* Mr J Booth

#### Observers

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Ms N Crowley, Head of Chief Executive's Office  
Ms J Faulds, Head of Appointee Management  
Mr J Wallace, Head of Contract Operations

\* Indicates present on the call

#### 1.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the thirtieth extraordinary meeting of the SQA Board of Management.

The Chair noted that apologies had been received from Seán Hagney, John McMorris and Dawnne Mahmoud.

### **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 Dr Thomson held an interest through his position as Head of Centre. Furthermore, it was noted that Ms Davis had children studying at Higher and Advanced 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.

### **1.13 Matters Arising**

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

## **1.2 Chief Executive's Update**

The Chief Executive informed the Board that the update would consist of three parts: the Education Reform, Results Day 2021 and Plans for 2022.

### **1.21 Education Reform Update**

The Board were reminded that Ken Muir would begin his work that day.

Mr Baxter talked through the work of the SQA Review Project Team.

The Board welcomed the update and discussed the situation in depth, agreeing that it was important for SQA to be included in Ken Muir's Expert Panel, given the expertise needed. The Board expressed concern that the review was being seen through the lens of National Qualifications, and the role that SQA plays in the wider skills, training and vocational sector needed to be highlighted. It was also important the review understood SQA's regulatory and commercial functions.

The Board agreed that staff must be kept informed of all stages of the reform and staff security must be addressed, ensuring that Fair Work principles were adhered to.

### **1.22 Results Day Update**

Ms Black presented a high-level overview of the results for 2021.

Mr Booth explained the communication plans around Results Day.

The Board welcomed the update.

### **1.23 Plans for 2022**

Ms Black advised the Board that there had been significant levels of engagement with both the Working Group and Steering Group for National Qualifications in relation to the plans for assessment in 2022. While the decision on the assessment approach was for Scottish Ministers, the parameters for contingency arrangements had been agreed and a gear change model would be developed. This model would encompass both disruption to learning and the cancellation of examinations with trigger points being easy to identify. It was emphasised that this model would require agreement from the full system.

The Board welcomed the update and agreed that all stages of the gear change model would need to be communicated effectively and in a timely manner.

### **1.3 Awarding 2021 – Delivery Assurance Report**

Due to time pressures this item was not discussed, but the contents were noted.

### **1.4 SQA Communications Strategy & Capacity Building**

Mr Booth updated the Board of the plans for SQA's Communications both internally and externally, explaining that SQA needed to be proactive and highlight the work being done. The action plan included a new communications group with partners.

The Board welcomed the update and supported the proposed approach.

In drawing the meeting to a close, the Chair thanked the Board for its contribution to the discussions and thanked the Chief Executive and the Executive Management Team for their professionalism and leadership at this challenging time.

The Chair took the opportunity to acknowledge that this was Mr Stewart's last meeting of the Board and thanked him for his eight years of service and contribution to SQA. The Chair stated that Mr Stewart had been a tremendous addition, providing strong advice and guidance. During his time on the Board, Mr Stewart had been Convenor of the Advisory Council and then the Accreditation Committee.

The Chair reminded the Board of the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 1 September 2021.