

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT – 4 JUNE 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Management held at 1.45 pm on Thursday 28 May 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 (from 2pm)
- * 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
- Ms J Faulds, Head of Service (BE10/2.3 only)

* Indicates present on the call

1 OPENING REMARKS**1.1 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and noted that no apologies had been received.

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 21 May 2020 were approved as an accurate record. The Chair also advised on a minor amendment around a point of clarity in the minutes of 14 May 2020. This was endorsed by the Board.

1.13 Matters Arising

The Chair highlighted to the Board that the minute of the Board meeting on 5 February had been circulated to members by email for approval for publication on the SQA website and requested all

comments and approval be submitted by return to the Corporate Office.

2 DIET 2020

2.1 Update

The Chief Executive provided a short update on a range of current issues, opening with the continued focus on the delivery phase of work around 2020 certification. The deadline for estimate submissions was the following day and levels of engagement across the system suggested that centres would be on course to deliver on this. Following the estimate submission deadline, communications would be issued to centres on the Post Certification Review process.

Regarding Diet 2021, the Chief Executive reported that discussions were ongoing with the Scottish Government and a range of stakeholders.

In relation to Higher National and Vocational Qualifications, work continued in close engagement with colleges and sector bodies. Joint communications with Skills Development Scotland had also been issued in relation to Foundation Apprenticeships.

The Board thanked the Chief Executive for the helpful update, noting in their discussions that the further guidance on National 4 and freestanding units had been provided as part of SQA's FAQs on the website.

2.2 Communications and Engagement

Mr McMorris updated the Board on the programme of communication and engagement underway to ensure effective delivery of key messages and support to SQA customers and stakeholders on the approaches being taken to manage the implications of Covid-19.

The update included further information on: resourcing; media and communications; data, research and measurement; and channel shift.

The Board thanked Mr McMorris for the full update, commenting on the breadth and depth of efforts that had been made over the last months, and welcoming the assurance it provided going forward.

In discussion, it was noted that SQA continued to engage with learners and young people and that this would serve to inform further communications work.

2.3 Coronavirus Impact on Appointees

Mrs Mahmoud presented a paper to the Board outlining the impact of the Coronavirus lockdown arrangements and the withdrawal of the 2020 examinations on the activities that would normally be undertaken by our various groups of appointees.

Keeping fair and consistent treatment to the forefront of SQA's approach, a very thorough analysis had been taken on the implications for each group of appointees in relation to the volume of activities actually undertaken in this unusual year and associated fees that will be paid.

The Board thanked Mrs Mahmoud and colleagues for the significant work that had been undertaken to assess the position. On the assurances that full

consideration of all facts, appropriate consultation, and legal advice had been taken, the Board approved the recommendation. It was welcomed that other planned work would serve to ensure SQA's future sustainable use of appointees.

The Chair thanked members for their time and contributing to the discussion, noting that the Board would meet again on Thursday 4 June 2020.