

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data
Sent: 25 May 2021 16:38
Subject: Communication to Learners

Hello all,

Many thanks for the opportunity to raise this at NQ21 Working Group this afternoon and thank you in advance to anyone who is able to find time to offer feedback.

A reminder that a request came from NQ21 to write a letter to learners detailing the support available to them in the coming weeks.

Initial drafts of this letter have been commented upon (with improvements suggested) by Education Scotland ([REDACTED]), SQA (Alasdair Macrae), SDS ([REDACTED]) and SYP ([REDACTED]).

I would be grateful for **comments by 1pm on Thursday** to allow the letter to be made available to the NQ21 Group ahead of full meeting on Friday. I am trying to keep this letter fairly punchy at around two pages (excluding the page of QR codes) in length – I am aware it is slightly over at present - so please be mindful if suggesting additional content. To save all our inboxes, there is no need to “reply to all”!

Thank you, have a lovely evening.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Joint Head of Qualifications Unit & Professional Insight Advisor

From: Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>
Sent: 03 March 2021 09:49
To: [REDACTED]@gov.scot Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data
Cc: Sue Pope <Sue.Pope@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: FW: Presentation for CAB

Hi [REDACTED]

Please find attached the presentation for tomorrow's CAB. I also emailed it to [REDACTED] earlier this morning.

Gill

From: Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>
Sent: 03 March 2021 08:56 Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data
To: [REDACTED]@gov.scot
Cc: [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk; Sue Pope <Sue.Pope@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: Presentation for CAB

Morning [REDACTED]

Attached is the presentation for CAB tomorrow

Gill

Dr Gill Stewart
Director of Qualifications Development

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

t: [REDACTED] | e: gill.stewart@sqa.org.uk | w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk> Scottish Qualifications Authority The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: 15 March 2021 15:56

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@eis.org.uk; [REDACTED]@sls-scotland.org.uk; [REDACTED]@scis.org.uk; [REDACTED]@cdn.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@universities-scotland.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@ed.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@collegesscotland.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@ucas.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@universities-scotland.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@renfrewshire.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@educationscotland.gov.scot; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>; Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot; [REDACTED]@sfc.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@sfc.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@universities-scotland.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@ed.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Cc: DirectorofLearning@gov.scot; Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot; Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Subject: Qualifications Contingency Group

Dear Qualifications Contingency Group members,

Please find attached a letter from Malcolm Pentland, Deputy Director, Curriculum, Qualifications and Gaelic Division.

Best wishes, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Senior Phase Unit | Learning Directorate
Scottish Government | Area 2-B North | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
M: [REDACTED]

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: DirectorofLearning@gov.scot <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>

Sent: 25 May 2021 13:00

To: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot

Cc: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk; [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk

Subject: RE: Appeals Process Timeline

Thanks Jean.

With regard to the following entry, would it be possible to say a bit more about the 'how' in plain English. Eg, can we say: At the appeals stage, teachers appointed by the SQA will not have details of the individual learner or whether they live in poverty

or not. They will offer a 'second opinion' without fear or favour by judging the learner's assessment evidence against the national standards and determining if they agree with the original grade, or whether the evidence suggests a higher or lower grade. If a learner is at risk of a lower grade, this will be carefully reviewed on an individual basis by an SQA Head of Service, and by the Chief Examiner if necessary, before the decision is finalised. In previous years the numbers of downgrades at appeals stage is exceptionally low.

<p>SQA Appointees review Learner evidence of assessment for each qualification</p>	<p>SQA appointees (practising teachers and lecturers) are trained to review learner assessment evidence and how to avoid bias. Their focus is on the knowledge, understanding and skills demonstrated in the evidence relative to the national standard for that qualification. Quality assurance procedures are applied to ensure consistency across the teams. These are overseen by senior appointees. Any downgrades are escalated to senior staff in Qualifications Directorate for review and confirmation of result.</p>	<p>From 16/08 – end of Appeals Service</p>
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Fiona has also agreed to urgently send us the numbers of 'downgrades' through appeals in the last few years. We are aiming to get a note to FM and Cab Sec urgently so if you could respond as quickly as possible I would be grateful.

Thanks
Graeme.

From: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data
Sent: 25 May 2021 12:28
To: Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>
Cc: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Appeals Process Timeline

Graeme/Malcolm,

As requested, the appeals process timeline.

Regards

Jean

Jean Blair
Director of Operations

t: [REDACTED] | **e:** jean.blair@sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>
Scottish Qualifications Authority
24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

Scottish Qualifications Authority

www.sqa.org.uk

From: Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk> **Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data**
Sent: 13 May 2021 09:03
To: Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot; DirectorofLearning@gov.scot; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot
Cc: [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk; CommunicationsDFM&Education@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: IMMEDIATE: Draft message from NQ21 Group

Thanks Malcom – good message

Just for your reference we made modifications to the assessment of all Courses with the exception of ESOL where we issued guidance. We can't amend the assessment of ESOL courses as they are recognised by NARIC for UK VISA purposes.

Gill **Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data**

From: Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>
Sent: 13 May 2021 08:54
To: DirectorofLearning@gov.scot; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot
Cc: [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk; CommunicationsDFM&Education@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: IMMEDIATE: Draft message from NQ21 Group

Clean version now attached with those changes made. Grateful for any final comments by 9.30am before sending on to NQ Group.

Thanks
Malcolm

National Qualifications 2021 – a message from organisations working across Scottish education

In recent days there have been some concerns raised in the media and elsewhere about arrangements for awarding National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses this year. We are acutely aware that this is a challenging time for learners across Scotland. However, we are very

concerned that some of the commentary is inaccurate and causing additional anxiety at this time. Please be assured that everyone in Scottish education is working hard to ensure learners achieve fair and credible results, allowing them to progress to further learning or work, whilst also ensuring steps are taken to ensure young people's wellbeing is protected through the process.

The National Qualifications 2021 Group, established last autumn, chaired by the SQA and including key representatives of young people, parents and teachers, has been meeting weekly to develop the Alternative Certification Model for this year following the cancellation of the SQA examinations diet. The model has been designed to be based on teacher and lecturer judgement of pupil and student achievement over a number of assessments rather than an end of year exam. Demonstrated attainment through these assessments is important in ensuring results are based on evidence of learning and skills and it is why many learners are undertaking some assessments just now. However, it is very important to highlight the following facts about the model:

- the model has the flexibility around the timing and nature of assessment to ensure that, as far as possible, there is maximum opportunity for learners to undertake the required learning and be given the best chance to succeed in any course assessments.
- the timeline for schools, colleges and training providers to submit provisional results has been extended to 25 June, providing more time for consolidation of learning and teaching and assessment
- most subjects have had their evidence requirements reduced, assessment components removed and/or content and context reduced
- subject-specific guidance has been published on the appropriate assessment evidence for all subjects and optional assessment resources have been published to help inform assessment planning and evidence gathering
- local and national support is in place to ensure provisional results are based on national standards
- the support available on e-Sgoil has been extended to learners who, for a variety of reasons, have experienced extreme disruption to their learning. A later certification contingency is being developed for those learners who have incomplete assessment evidence due to extreme disruption
- an appeals process for learners is being developed and will be published shortly.

In summary our key message for learners is: your grades will be judged by your teachers and lecturers, based on assessment evidence.

We all remain committed to continuing to work together to deliver for Scotland's learners and the Alternative Certification Model has been designed by the organisations noted below to best achieve that in the circumstances faced this school year, ensuring that learners get the national qualification grades that they deserve.

Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Colleges Scotland, Education Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS), the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Scottish Government, National Parent Forum of Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Parliament.

From: Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>

Sent: 13 May 2021 08:27

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Pentland MK (Malcolm)

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

<Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@sqa.org.uk>; Communications DFM & Education
<CommunicationsDFM&Education@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Sewell J
(Jonathan) (ECON) <Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Jean
Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: IMMEDIATE: Draft message from NQ21 Group

Two slight further tweaks suggested below, having re-read it this morning. Thanks, Graeme.

From: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data
Sent: 13 May 2021 08:20
To: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; Director of Learning
<DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@sqa.org.uk>; Communications DFM & Education
<CommunicationsDFM&Education@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Sewell J
(Jonathan) (ECON) <Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>;
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Jean
Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: IMMEDIATE: Draft message from NQ21 Group

Thanks Malcolm

We spoke. Redacted - section 30(b)(ii) free and frank exchange of views

[redacted] Simplest
amendment would be:
....your grades will be judged by your teachers, based on assessment evidence.....

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority

w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>
The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden,
Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>
Sent: 13 May 2021 08:12
To: DirectorofLearning@gov.scot; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>;
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>
Cc: [redacted] <[redacted]@sqa.org.uk>; CommunicationsDFM&Education@gov.scot;
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot;
[redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>; [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: IMMEDIATE: Draft message from NQ21 Group

Apologies, minor change made in text within highlighted section.

From: Pentland MK (Malcolm) Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data
Sent: 13 May 2021 07:48
To: Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Fiona Robertson
<fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; Communications DFM & Education
<CommunicationsDFM&Education@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Sewell J
(Jonathan) (ECON) <Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;
[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Subject: IMMEDIATE: Draft message from NQ21 Group
Importance: High

Fiona, [REDACTED]

Please see further revision below with a change highlighted based on the EIS comms. Previous changes are highlighted in red and blue text in the version further down the chain. I'd be grateful for any comments/clearance asap in order to put this round the NQ Group members for sign off today.

Adding SG Comms and some of my team to the distribution.

Thanks
Malcolm

National Qualifications 2021 – a message from organisations working across Scottish education

In recent days there have been some concerns raised in the media and elsewhere about arrangements for awarding National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses this year. We are acutely aware that this is a challenging time for learners across Scotland. However, we are very concerned that some of the commentary is inaccurate and causing additional anxiety at this time. Please be assured that everyone in Scottish education is working hard to ensure learners achieve fair and credible results, allowing them to progress to further learning or work, whilst also ensuring steps are taken to ensure young people's wellbeing is protected through the process.

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- the model has the flexibility around the timing and nature of assessment to ensure that, as far as possible, there is maximum opportunity for learners to undertake the required learning and be given the best chance to succeed in any course assessments.

- the timeline for schools, colleges and training providers to submit provisional results has been extended to 25 June, providing more time for consolidation of learning and teaching and assessment
- most subjects have had their evidence requirements reduced, assessment components removed and/or content and context reduced
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- an appeals process for learners is being developed and will be published shortly.

In summary our key message for learners is: your grades will be judged by your teachers, based on your work.

We all remain committed to continuing to work together to deliver for Scotland's learners and the Alternative Certification Model has been designed by the organisations noted below to best achieve that in the circumstances faced this school year, ensuring that learners get the national qualification grades that they deserve.

Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Colleges Scotland, Education Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS), the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Scottish Government, National Parent Forum of Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Parliament.

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From: Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>
Sent: 12 May 2021 19:24
To: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: DRAFT message

Thanks [REDACTED] and Malcolm. Please find below a few further changes (in blue) and one additional line offering learners a key overall message.

When you issue this to NQ members Malcolm please explain the that this was an action from CERG this afternoon, agreed by members following discussion with DFM. If the draft message is circulated first thing in the morning I'd be tempted to ask for feedback and sign off by 3pm, as well as agreement to use the badges of the

organisations represented when the message goes out. This gives us time to share this with Ministers before (hopefully) issuing the message on Friday morning.

Can we bring SG comms in to this chain too please. Copying to Colin too for awareness and any comment at this stage.

Graeme.

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>

Sent: 12 May 2021 18:20

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@sqa.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk)>

Subject: RE: DRAFT message

Fiona, Graeme, [REDACTED] (and adding Jonathan)

Please see below some suggested amendments that I think would be helpful.

Given the ask I understand DFM made at CERG, I am happy to put the draft text, once agreed, round the NQ Group for agreement/comment....should we seek this by close tomorrow (with Friday morning's NQ meeting as a fall back for finalising if needed) and then issuing by midday, Friday?

Thanks
Malcolm

Redacted - section 30(b)(ii) free and frank exchange of views

National Qualifications 2021 – a message from organisations working across Scottish education

In recent days there **have** been **some** concerns raised in the media and elsewhere about arrangements for **awarding** National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses this year. We are acutely aware that this is a challenging time for learners across Scotland [REDACTED]. However, we are very concerned that some of the commentary **is inaccurate and causing additional** anxiety at this time. Please be assured that everyone in Scottish education is working hard to ensure learners achieve fair and credible results, allowing them to progress to further learning or work, **whilst also ensuring steps are taken to ensure young people's wellbeing is protected through the process.**

The National Qualifications 2021 Group, established last autumn **and including key representatives of young people, parents and teachers**, has been meeting weekly to develop the Alternative Certification Model **for this year** following the cancellation of the SQA examinations diet. The model is based on teacher and lecturer judgement of demonstrated learner attainment. **It is important that results are based on evidence of learning and skills so there is confidence in them.** Demonstrated attainment in the form of evidence is the basis for that judgement and that is why many learners are undertaking some assessments just now. However, it is very important to highlight **the followings facts about the model:**

- the model has the flexibility around the timing and nature of assessment to ensure that, as far as possible, there is maximum opportunity for learners to undertake the required learning and be given the best chance to succeed in any course assessments.
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In summary our key message for learners is: your grades will be judged by your teachers, based on your work.

We all remain committed to continuing to work together to deliver for Scotland's learners **and the Alternative Certification Model has been designed by the** organisations noted below **to best achieve that in the circumstances faced this school year**, ensuring that learners get the national qualification grades that they deserve.

Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Colleges Scotland, Education Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS), the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Scottish Government, National Parent Forum of Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Parliament.

From: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 12 May 2021 17:30

To: Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@sqa.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk)>

Subject: RE: DRAFT message

Importance: High

Graeme and Malcolm

With thanks to [REDACTED], here is a first draft. I have made a couple of minor tweaks. I think there is merit in this being specifically directed at learners, so the language could change as a result (more 'you' and less 'learner', 'they/them'). That might work better?

Fiona

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority

w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden,
Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 12 May 2021 17:05

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: DRAFT message

Hi Fiona

As requested, here is a suggested message:

National Qualifications 2021 – a message from the Scottish education system

In recent days there has been concerns raised in the media and elsewhere about arrangements for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses this year. As a system, we are acutely aware that this is a challenging time for learners across Scotland, and after a very challenging year. However, we are very concerned that some of the commentary may be causing further anxiety at this time. Please be assured that everyone working in Scottish education is working hard to ensure learners achieve fair and credible results, allowing them to progress to further learning or work.

The National Qualifications 2021 Group, established last autumn, has been meeting weekly to develop the Alternative Certification Model. The model is based on teacher and lecturer judgement of demonstrated learner attainment. Demonstrated attainment in the form of evidence is the basis for that judgement and that is why many learners are undertaking some assessments just now. However, it is very important to highlight that:

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- a later certification contingency is being developed for those learners who have incomplete assessment evidence
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We all remain committed to continue to work together to deliver for Scotland's learners.

Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), Colleges Scotland, Education Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), School Leaders Scotland (SLS), the Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS), Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Scottish Government, National Parent Forum of Scotland, and the Scottish Youth Parliament.

-ends-

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

www.sqa.org.uk

postmaster@sqa.org.uk

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot > **On Behalf Of** CabSecES@gov.scot

Sent: 24 May 2021 07:37

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; CabSecES@gov.scot

Cc: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Mtg to Discuss Assessment Appeals

Hi Fiona

Have now done.

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

T: [REDACTED] | M: [REDACTED] | E: cabsecES@gov.scot

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

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From: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>

Sent: 24 May 2021 07:19

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

Cc: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Mtg to Discuss Assessment Appeals

Hi [REDACTED] Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Hope you are well.

Could you also invite Jean Blair, Director of Operations at SQA, to the meeting at 0930 this morning?

Thanks.

Fiona

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority

w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden,
Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

-----Original Appointment-----

From: CabSecES@gov.scot <CabSecES@gov.scot> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 22 May 2021 13:11

To: CabSecES@gov.scot; shirley-anne.somerville.msp@parliament.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot;

[REDACTED]@gov.scot; DirectorofLearning@gov.scot; Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot;

Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot; Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot; Fiona Robertson

Subject: Mtg to Discuss Assessment Appeals

When: 24 May 2021 09:30-10:30 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.

Where: Teams Mtg

All

Ms Somerville is keen to meet first thing Monday morning to agree way forward with a view to making possible Parliamentary statement on Thursday. This will require a note being sent to FM Monday PM following policy decision being taken with a view to agreement at Cabinet Tuesday AM.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 26 May 2021 09:13

To: Sue Pope <Sue.Pope@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; Margot McKerrell <Margot.McKerrell@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>;

Robert Quinn <Robert.Quinn@sqa.org.uk>; John Meehan <John.Meehan@sqa.org.uk>; Steve Borley

<Steve.Borley@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@ayrshire.ac.uk; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>;

[REDACTED]@dundeeschools.scot; Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot;

[REDACTED]@southlanarkshire.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@eis.org.uk;

[REDACTED]@dundeeandangus.ac.uk; [REDACTED]@scis.org.uk; [REDACTED]@hsog.co.uk;

[REDACTED]@educationscotland.gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; Stuart McLaren <Stuart.McLaren@sqa.org.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: NQ21 QA ACM WG meeting 25 May - incomplete evidence contingency amended paper

Good morning all

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█ and I had a chat after the meeting – the statement on appeals being possible for “contingency candidates”, but **not** priority appeals is really important, but *perhaps* not immediately evident to the system – especially a system working at current pace. Is it worth making more of that text bold, or highlighting it in some other way?

Thanks

█
Joint Head of Qualifications Unit & Professional Insight Advisor

From: Sue Pope <Sue.Pope@sqa.org.uk> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data
Sent: 25 May 2021 15:34
To: █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; Margot McKerrell <Margot.McKerrell@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; Robert Quinn <Robert.Quinn@sqa.org.uk>; John Meehan <John.Meehan@sqa.org.uk>; Steve Borley <Steve.Borley@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@ayrshire.ac.uk>; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; █ <█@dundeeschools.scot>; Sewell J (Jonathan) (ECON) <Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot>; █ <█@southlanarkshire.gov.uk>; █ <█@gov.scot>; █ <█@eis.org.uk>; █ <█@dundeeandangus.ac.uk>; █ <█@scis.org.uk>; █ <█@hsog.co.uk>; █ <█@educationscotland.gov.scot>; █ <█@gov.scot>; █ <█@gov.scot>; █ <█@sqa.org.uk>; Stuart McLaren <Stuart.McLaren@sqa.org.uk>
Cc: █ <█@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: NQ21 QA ACM WG meeting 25 May - incomplete evidence contingency amended paper

Hello

Thank you so much for the discussion today.

I attach an annotated version of the paper for your consideration. I would be most grateful for your feedback by 1300 tomorrow.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you want to speak.

Thanks in anticipation

Best wishes

Sue

Sue Pope (she/her)

Head of Service: Science, Mathematics and Core Skills

Qualifications Development, SQA

m: █

The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ

From: Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>

Sent: 23 April 2021 13:29

To: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Cc: Michael Baxter <Michael.Baxter@sqa.org.uk>; Steve Borley <Steve.Borley@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Your help please - appeals

Hi Jean,

I understand [REDACTED] has come back to you on this confirming that one of [REDACTED] will join.

Thanks

Malcolm

From: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 23 April 2021 12:02

To: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>

Cc: Michael Baxter <Michael.Baxter@sqa.org.uk>; Steve Borley <Steve.Borley@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: FW: Your help please - appeals

Hi Malcolm,

Please see below.

I've received O-o-O for Jonathan and [REDACTED]. I'm reaching out to see if you wish Scot Gov representation on this group.

Please advise.

Thanks

Jean

Jean Blair

Director of Operations

t: [REDACTED] | **e:** jean.blair@sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Authority

24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 23 April 2021 12:54

To: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; Michael Baxter
<Michael.Baxter@sqa.org.uk>; Steve Borley <Steve.Borley@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Your help please - appeals

Hi Jean

Either [REDACTED] would be happy to be involved in any meeting on appeals. We can determine who is best placed to attend once the date/time is

fixed. Think afternoon would be better on Monday/Tuesday but we should have flexibility if it has to be a morning slot.

Best regards

██████████

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Jean Blair

Sent: 23 April 2021 11:58

To: ██████████@dundeeschools.scot>; Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot; ██████████
██████████@southlanarkshire.gov.uk>; ██████████@gov.scot; ██████████
██████████@eis.org.uk>; ██████████@dundeeandangus.ac.uk>; ██████████
██████████@scis.org.uk>; ██████████@hsog.co.uk>; ██████████@educationscotland.gov.scot; ██████████
██████████@ayrshire.ac.uk>

Cc: Michael Baxter <michael.baxter@sqa.org.uk>; Steve Borley <Steve.Borley@sqa.org.uk>; ██████████
██████████@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: Your help please - appeals

Dear All,

Following our discussion about the appeals process on Wednesday, we have now taken the same paper to our Advisory Council, Qualifications Committee and the NQ 21 steering group.

As you know, there are questions and points of detail needing to be explored and you might recall that I had suggested we set up a sub group to assist. I'm getting in touch to see if there are any willing volunteers amongst the working group to assist Mike and colleagues in addressing these.

There is a small matter of urgency.....we would be looking to meet on Monday or Tuesday of next week.

Can you please let us know if you would be willing to assist with this work?

Thanks

Jean

Jean Blair

Director of Operations

t: ██████████ | **e:** jean.blair@sqa.org.uk | **w:** <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Authority

24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

From: John McMorris <John.McMorris@sqa.org.uk>

Sent: 14 May 2021 17:21

To: Stuart McLaren <Stuart.McLaren@sqa.org.uk>; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>;

[REDACTED]@sls-scotland.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@southlanarkshire.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@eis.org.uk>;
'DirectorofLearning@gov.scot' <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; 'Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot'
<Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart
<Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>; Jonathan.Sewell@gov.scot>;
[REDACTED]@educationscotland.gov.scot>; [REDACTED]@renfrewshire.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]@scis.org.uk>; Liz McGrath <Liz.McGrath@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@ayrshire.ac.uk'
[REDACTED]@ayrshire.ac.uk>; 'Gorman G (Gayle' <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>;
[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>; 'NPFS Renfrewshire' <renfrewshire@npfs.org.uk>;
[REDACTED].msyp@sypmail.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@syp.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@educationscotland.gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: Appeals

Colleagues

As agreed this morning please find attached some details on the core elements of the appeals model as it currently stands. This is consistent with the discussion at NQ group a couple of weeks ago.

Please note this is a confidential draft and would request that this is not forwarded

Many thanks John

John McMorris

Director of Business Development

t: [REDACTED] | e: john.mcmorris@sqa.org.uk | w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

Scottish Qualifications Authority

The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>

Sent: 23 May 2021 17:01

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot>;

Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot

Cc: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>; DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Gill Stewart

<Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>;

[REDACTED]@educationscotland.gov.scot

Subject: RE: 2021 Appeals

All

Clean version attached with most of Fiona's and Gill's comments included.

Under 'Arguments of Principle' I have stuck to the headline summary (reference to rUK position is covered in a separate point at the end and the point about setting a precedent and credibility is well covered in the accompanying papers).

I have included a short explanation of the data in the system post mid-October point made by Gill.

[REDACTED] – any further comments on this before sending on?

Fiona – yes, Ms Somerville will have both SQA papers as well as this summary.

Thanks
Malcolm

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>
Sent: 23 May 2021 16:25
To: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>;
Gorman G (Gayle) <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Director of Learning
<DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>; Jean Blair
<Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: RE: 2021 Appeals

Malcolm

Some very quick comments from myself and Gill Stewart.

I think the analysis here could be helpful for tomorrow, but let's not assume the issues away.

Demand is difficult to quantify this year, because the approach is so different. Larger volumes present risk and long lead times would not be welcomed. Volumes in excess of 75,000 present very significant risk to the system and to 2022. Large volumes undermine the ACM.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that the Cabinet Secretary is sighted on both SQA papers, which look at these issues in more detail.

Happy to speak further if helpful.

Many thanks.

Fiona

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority

w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden,
Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>
Sent: 23 May 2021 13:41
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>;
Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; DirectorofLearning@gov.scot
Subject: 2021 Appeals

Hi [REDACTED] Fiona, Gayle

Further to discussion with [REDACTED] this morning, and using the helpful material Fiona has provided, the attached table seeks to provide a summary to assist tomorrow morning's discussion with Ms Somerville. [REDACTED]

Redacted - section 30(b)(ii) free and frank exchange of views

We intend providing this to Ms Somerville in addition to Fiona's paper but I would be very grateful if you could make any critical changes to this over the course of this afternoon. Fiona, Gayle - apologies for asking for this Sunday, although I think [REDACTED] may have already highlighted that this would be coming. [REDACTED]

Please get back to me back by 5pm if at all possible.

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Thanks
Malcolm

Malcolm Pentland | Deputy Director

Curriculum, Qualifications and Gaelic Division | email: malcolm.pentland@gov.scot | [REDACTED]

Learning Directorate | Area 2B North | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ

Buidheann-Stiùiridh an Ionnsachaidh | Raon 2B Tuath | Cidhe Bhictòria | Dùn Èideann | EH6 6QQ

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>

Sent: 23 May 2021 17:26

To: [REDACTED]@gov.scot; Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot; Fiona Robertson

<fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]@gov.scot; DirectorofLearning@gov.scot; Gill Stewart

<Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>; Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>;

[REDACTED]@educationscotland.gov.scot

Subject: RE: 2021 Appeals

Couple of team looking at it now [REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work

(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Date: Sunday, 23 May 2021, 5:19 pm

To: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>, Fiona Robertson

<fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>, Gorman G (Gayle) <Gayle.Gorman@educationscotland.gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]@gov.scot>, Director of Learning

<DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>, Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>, Jean Blair

<Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>, [REDACTED]@educationscotland.gov.scot>

Subject: RE: 2021 Appeals

Thanks for all the hard work on this on a Sunday. Much appreciated. I'm content with the summary paper, to go to Ms Somerville alongside the two papers from SQA. I don't know if ES colleagues are able to comment in the time available- perhaps Malcolm could see if he can get hold of [REDACTED].

Thanks

From: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>

From: [REDACTED]@gov.scot [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 22 May 2021 11:17

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot; DirectorofLearning@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Cc: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: SQA Appeals Service - 2021

Importance: High

Hi everyone. Sorry for Emailing at the weekend. I'm so grateful for all the hard work going into this – on the back of a really intense year already.

I wonder if I could just clarify timescales on the back of a call with Ms Somerville's office this morning. We are hoping for a possible Cabinet Secretary statement this coming week, probably on Thursday. I think that means having a clear policy position during the course of Monday, ahead of Cabinet on Tuesday. This may well mean an early meeting with Ms Somerville on Monday morning.

So, with apologies, I do think we'll need to move this on over the weekend. I've just texted Fiona to see if she and I can get a discussion today, as part of that.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

From: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>

Sent: 21 May 2021 23:24

To: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Cc: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: SQA Appeals Service - 2021

Thanks Malcolm

I fully understand the points you are raising, but the answer is not straightforward and I allude to that in the paper.

Redacted - section 30(b)(ii) free and frank exchange of views

The potential capacity in the system is determined by the subject and level mix of appeals and the availability of appointees. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] As stated in the paper, those appeals which impact on FE/HE entry or progression into work will, as always, take absolute priority during August. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Bottom line is there are many moving parts here. I will discuss further with colleagues –I agree that some illustrative scenarios may be helpful - and happy to discuss further over the weekend or Monday morning.

Many thanks.

Fiona

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority

w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>

The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden,
Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 1FD

From: Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot> Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

Sent: 21 May 2021 21:58

To: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk>; DirectorofLearning@gov.scot;
[REDACTED]@gov.scot; [REDACTED]@gov.scot

Cc: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>

Subject: RE: SQA Appeals Service - 2021

Thanks Fiona.

This note has been shared with Ms Somerville's office this evening. We will provide any feedback as quickly as possible, however, in meantime, and accepting the various assumptions that need to be made, can you share detail on different possible scenarios and the potential capacity within the system to flex to meet varying levels of appeals (at different points between 75,000 and 300,000)? Do you know, or can we establish (perhaps through a survey), what a likely maximum number of available appointees may be this year? Can more detail be provided on how appeals might be prioritised in the event of an approach that resulted in a significantly higher volume being received?

From our discussions with the Cabinet Secretary, an understanding of these points will be important in her consideration of the options in relation to appeals for this year

and I would be grateful if could provide a response of these points during the course of Monday. Very happy to discuss further.

Best wishes
Malcolm

From: Fiona Robertson <fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk> Redacted 38(1)(b) personal data
Sent: 21 May 2021 20:59
To: Pentland MK (Malcolm) <Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot>; Director of Learning <DirectorofLearning@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Cc: Jean Blair <Jean.Blair@sqa.org.uk>; Gill Stewart <Gill.Stewart@sqa.org.uk>
Subject: SQA Appeals Service - 2021
Importance: High

In confidence

Colleagues

Please see attached paper for the urgent attention of the Cabinet Secretary. I hope this is helpful and I would be happy to discuss further.

Fiona

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive
Scottish Qualifications Authority

w: <http://www.sqa.org.uk>
The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, GLASGOW G2 8DQ | 24 Wester Shawfair, Lowden,