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**COMBINED REPORT:  FIRST DRAFT
SCOTTISH STAKEHOLDER TRACKING RESEARCH
2001 – 2020 (January 2021)**

**PREPARED FOR:    Scottish Qualifications Authority**

**Scottish Stakeholder Tracking Research 2001 - 2020**

**Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd**

**January 2021**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Qualifications Profile

- Levels of **prompted awareness** of National Qualifications were high in 2020, particularly in relation to *National 4s, National 5s, Highers, Advanced Highers, SVQs* and *HNCs/HNDs.*

- Amongst those who were aware of a qualification, there was a significant extent to which they believed they *knew enough about it*, particularly in relation to *National 4s, National 5s, Highers, Advanced Highers, SVQs, HNCs/HNDs and PDAs.*

### Credibility of Scottish Qualifications

- The perceived credibility of qualifications – amongst those aware of them – was high in 2020, particularly in terms of *National 5s, Highers, Advanced Highers, SVQs, HNDs/HNDs* and *PDAs.* However, levels of perceived credibility of *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3* and *National 4s* were somewhat lower, albeit improving in terms of the former.

- Almost a third of respondents in 2020 stated that their overall views on the credibility of **all** of the qualifications they had heard of – taken together – had changed over the previous year. This figure is higher than any other found in any of the previous eight survey phases.

- Amongst those in 2020 who stated that their views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had changed over the previous year, around a third stated that their views had become *more positive.* This outcome continues to be indicative of a notable degree of variance which has been apparent in this regard over a number of years.

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**SQA Profile**

- In 2020, well over 4 out of 5 respondents stated that they had heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority.  This outcome is almost identical to that found in 2019 but continues to be slightly lower than those found between 2012 and 2018.

- Three quarters of respondents in 2020 – who were aware of SQA – believed that they *knew enough about* the Authority.  This outcome is identical to that found in 2019 and, with one exception, is broadly in line with the outcomes found in the other survey phases since 2012.

- 3 out of 5 respondents aware of SQA in 2020 believed the Authority to have *high credibility*.  This outcome is significantly lower than that found in both 2018 and 2019 and, indeed, notably reverses a rise which had been apparent in this regard since 2017.

- Almost 3 out of 10 respondents in 2020 believed SQA to have low credibility.  This represents a very significant rise since both 2018 and 2019 and notably reverses a downward trend which had been apparent in this regard since 2016.

- When those in 2020 stating their belief that SQA has high credibility were asked – on an unprompted basis – why they believed this to be the case, their primary responses focused around *SQA being a well-known and well-established organisation* and, thereafter, *SQA being the principal awarding body in Scotland* and *SQA 'doing a good job'*.

- Although on a somewhat indicative basis, those believing SQA to have low credibility in 2020 – when asked, on an unprompted basis, why they believed this to be the case – principally cited *confusion due to the 2020 exams crisis* and *issues with the exams in 2020*.

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- In 2020, around 3 out of 5 respondents agreed that SQA *can be trusted*, with this applying to around half of respondents in relation to SQA *enabling organisations to carry out their roles more effectively* and *being a progressive organisation*. The outcomes for each of these three attributes are significantly lower than those found between 2015 and 2019.

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## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

This report details findings to emerge from the latest phases of a programme of research undertaken on an ongoing basis on behalf of the Scottish Qualifications Authority by Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd. The fieldwork for these phases of the research was undertaken in 2020.

The purpose of the research is to provide SQA with ongoing information with respect to its performance in a number of key areas. This is achieved by means of three surveys per annum which incorporate *core questions* (i.e. questions which are asked in all survey phases) and *ad hoc questions* (i.e. questions which are specific to a survey phase).

Eight key Scottish Stakeholder groups are targeted in the research process:

- Young Potential Candidates (individuals aged between 14 and 18 inclusive)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (individuals aged between 19 and 34 inclusive)
- Mature Potential Candidates (individuals aged over 34 without secondary school-aged children)
- Parents/Carers (individuals with secondary school-aged children)
- Secondary Schools (all staff, including support staff)
- Colleges (all staff, including support staff)
- Training Providers (members of their management team)
- Employers (person responsible for training, recruitment or human resource development)

This report focuses on the core questions that were asked during the three survey phases in 2020[1].

The Stakeholder Tracking Research is usually based around face-to-face interviews with four *Public Audiences* (i.e. Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates and Parents) and structured telephone interviews with four *Professional Audiences* (i.e. Secondary Schools, Colleges, Training Providers and Employers). However, due to the COVID-19 situation, with one exception, it was impractical to adopt this methodological approach.

Accordingly, whilst it was possible to continue with structured telephone interviews with Employers, alternative methodologies were adopted for the remaining audiences, namely:

- The administration of an online questionnaire to Young Potential Candidates, Parents/Carers, Schools, Colleges and Training Providers
- Conducting structured telephone interviews with Intermediate Potential Candidates and Mature Potential Candidates

The table below outlines the number of completed questionnaires/ interviews achieved with each of these audiences across the three survey phases in 2020:

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[1] The number of core questions asked in 2020 was lower than in previous survey phases. This was due to the fact that the number of ad hoc questions in 2020 were greater, as they focused around issues pertaining to COVID-19.

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| Audience | Methodology | Sample Size |
|---|---|---|
| Young Potential Candidates | Online questionnaire | 217 completed questionnaires |
| Intermediate Potential Candidates | Structured telephone interviews | 160 interviews |
| Mature Potential Candidates | Structured telephone interviews | 194 interviews |
| Parents/Carers | Online questionnaire | 368 completed questionnaires |
| Schools | Online questionnaire | 411 completed questionnaires |
| Colleges | Online questionnaire | 400 completed questionnaires |
| Training Providers | Online questionnaire | 184 completed questionnaires |
| Employers | Structured telephone interviews | 365 interviews |

It should be noted that, during the analysis process, weightings were applied to the outcomes for each of these Stakeholder groups in order to ensure that each group had an equal impact on survey outcomes.

This report is one in a series which are produced on behalf of SQA and focuses upon the core questions asked in the survey phases between 2012 and 2020 (a copy of these core questions is attached as *Appendix I*). It should be noted that a number of new core questions were introduced between 2009 and 2012 and that a number of questions asked in previous surveys were removed from the questionnaire. Furthermore, a number of additional core questions were added in 2013. In addition, core questions relating to CfE were removed in 2017 and replaced with questions relating to DYW. Accordingly, comparisons can only be drawn for original core questions since the survey process began and the new core questions since they were introduced.

As well as reporting findings from 2012 to 2020 at an aggregate level, where possible and appropriate, the report also highlights variances on the basis of the responses of the eight Stakeholder groups noted earlier.

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## 2.0    NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE

*"Have you heard of the following qualifications?"*[2]

**Figure 1:  National Qualifications Awareness (Prompted)**



Base:  All Respondents
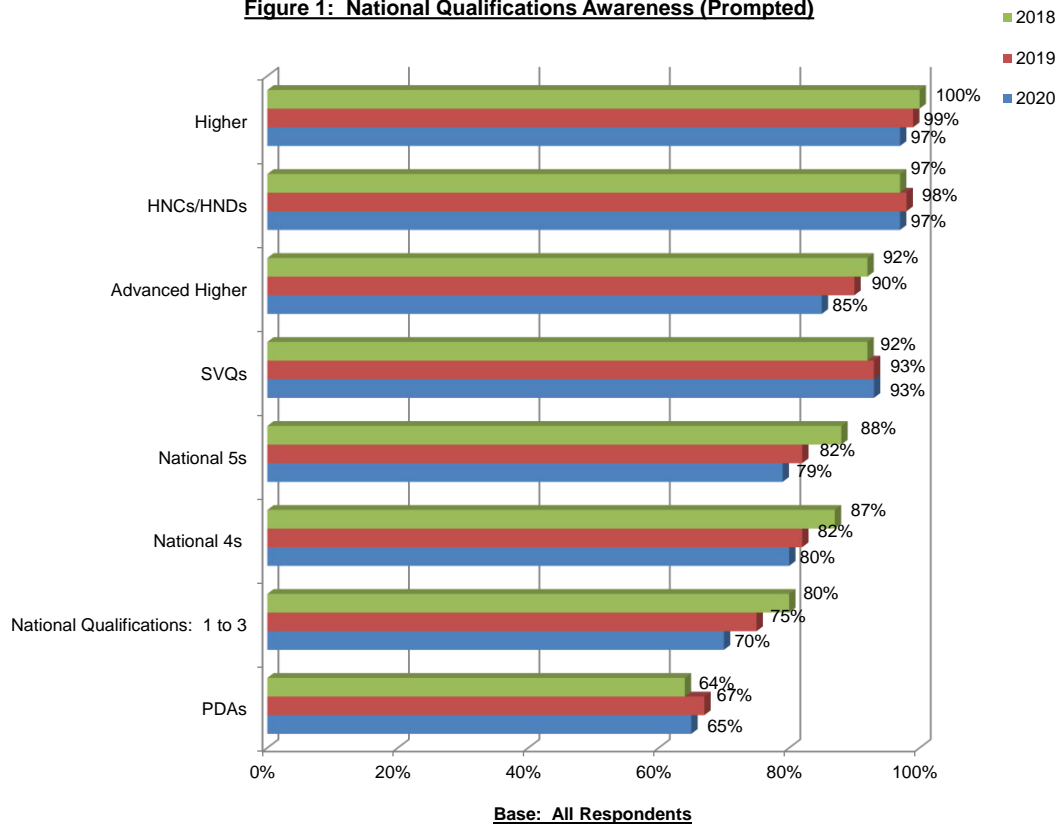
From Figure 1, it can be seen that levels of prompted awareness of the National Qualifications under consideration in 2020 were highest in relation to:

- Highers (97%)
- HNCs/HNDs (97%)
- SVQs (93%)
- Advanced Highers (85%)
- National 4s (80%)
- National 5s (79%)

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[2] In all previous survey phases, respondents had been asked about their awareness of academic or vocational qualifications on an unprompted basis.  However, due to the changed methodological approach adopted for a number of audiences in 2020, the data provided was not comparable to that derived previously.

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It should also be noted that levels of prompted awareness of the two remaining National Qualification types were lower in relative terms but continue to be relatively high in absolute terms, i.e.:

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (70%)
- PDAs (65%)

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 1 indicated that levels of prompted awareness of each of the National Qualifications under consideration in 2020 were highest amongst the respondent types noted below (where notable variances were apparent):

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3: Colleges (90%), Young Potential Candidates (88%), Training Providers (80%) and Schools (79%)
- National 4s: Colleges (100%), Schools (98%), Young Potential Candidates (94%) and Training Providers (87%)
- National 5s: Colleges (100%), Schools (99%), Training Providers (93%), Young Potential Candidates (93%) and Employers (77%)
- Advanced Highers: Colleges (100%), Training Providers (100%), Schools (99%), Parents (98%), Employers (94%) and Young Potential Candidates (82%)
- PDAs: Schools (98%), Training Providers (94%), Colleges (85%) and Young Potential Candidates (76%)

In addition, it should be noted that lowest levels of awareness of SVQs were noted by Mature Potential Candidates (72% compared to between 93% and 99% for all remaining audiences).
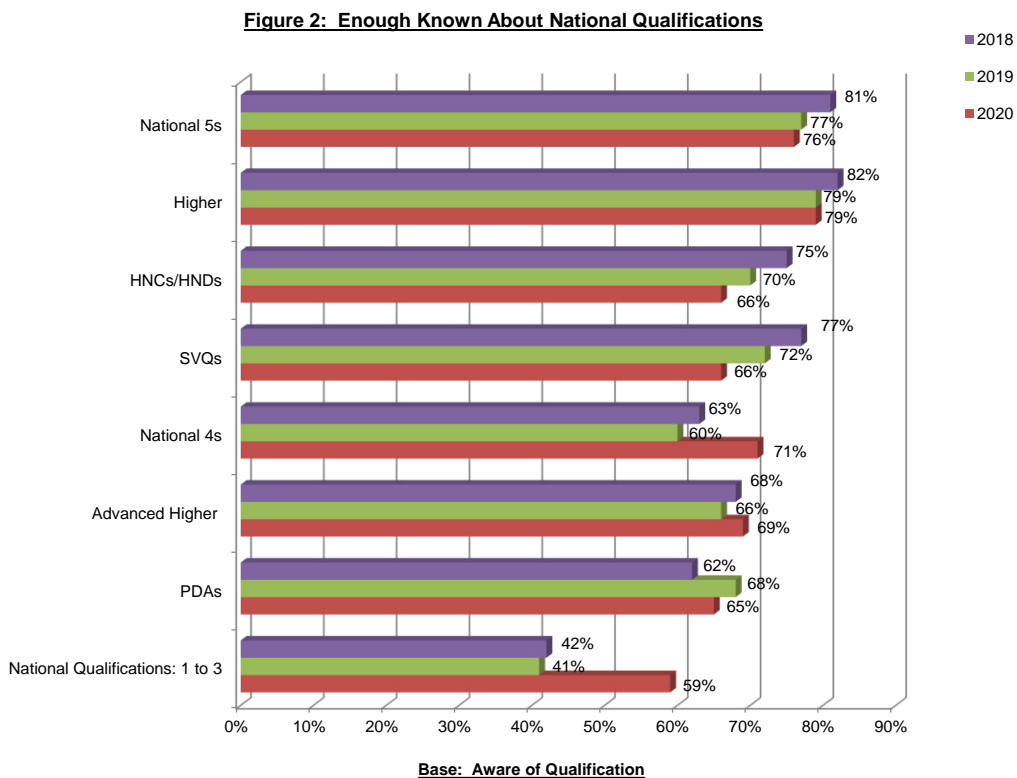
It can also be seen from Figure 1 that levels of prompted awareness of each of the National Qualifications under consideration changed little between 2019 and 2020, with the most notable – but only marginal – changes relating to:

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- Advanced Highers (falling from 90% to 85%) which was primarily driven by decreasing awareness of these qualifications amongst Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates and Mature Potential Candidates

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (falling from 75% to 70%) which was primarily driven by decreasing awareness of these qualifications amongst Schools and Employers

It should also be noted that, between 2018 and 2020, there has been a fall in prompted awareness of a number of National Qualifications, namely:

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (falling from 80% to 70%)
- National 4s (falling from 87% to 80%)
- National 5s (falling from 88% to 79%)
- Advanced Highers (falling from 92% to 85%)

*"Do you think you know enough about these qualifications?"*

**Figure 2: Enough Known About National Qualifications**



Base: Aware of Qualification

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From Figure 2, it can be seen that, in 2020, those who believed they *knew enough about* qualifications of which they were aware were most likely to state this in relation to:

- Highers (79%)
- National 5s (76%)
- National 4s (71%)
- Advanced Highers (69%)
- HNCs/HNDs (66%)
- SVQs (66%)
- PDAs (65%)

Thereafter, amongst those aware of National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3, the lowest percentage was noted in terms of their belief that they *knew enough about these qualifications* (59%), albeit that this is only marginally lower than the outcomes here for other qualifications (such as SVQs, HNCs/HNDs and PDAs).

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 2 indicated that those most likely to believe that they *knew enough about* qualifications of which they were aware are as noted below (where notable variances were apparent):

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3: Young Potential Candidates (72%), Mature Potential Candidates (71%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (69%)
- National 4s: Colleges (97%), Schools (81%) and Young Potential Candidates (78%)
- National 5s: Colleges (98%), Schools (89%) and Young Potential Candidates (86%)
- Highers: Colleges (98%), Schools (84%), Young Potential Candidates (83%) and Parents (80%)

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- Advanced Highers:  Colleges (87%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (74%), Mature Potential Candidates (71%), Schools (68%), Employers (68%) and Young Potential Candidates (67%)

- SVQs:  Training Providers (85%), Employers (83%), Schools (72%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (68%)

- HNCs/HNDs:  Schools (91%), Employers (81%), Training Providers (72%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (70%)

- PDAs:  Schools (87%), Training Providers (76%) and Parents (70%)

From Figure 2, it can be seen that the extent to which respondents believed that they *knew enough about* most of the National Qualifications under consideration changed little between 2019 and 2020.  However, during that time, there was a notable increase in the extent to which those aware of National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 believed that they knew enough about these qualifications (rising from 41% to 59%), with a notable increase also being apparent in this regard amongst those aware of National 4s (rising from 60% to 71%).

However, between 2019 and 2020, there was a marginal decrease amongst those aware of SVQs that they *knew enough about* these qualifications (falling from 72% to 66%).

It is of interest to note that the increasing belief that *enough is known about* National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 was primarily driven by Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges and Schools, whilst the increasing belief that *enough is known about* National 4s was primarily driven by Intermediate Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges and Training Providers.

In contrast, the marginal decrease amongst those aware of SVQs that they *knew enough about* these qualifications was primarily driven by Colleges.

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## 3.0 CREDIBILITY OF SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS

*"How would you rate the credibility of these qualifications?"*

**Figure 3: Qualifications Credibility**



Base: Aware of Qualification
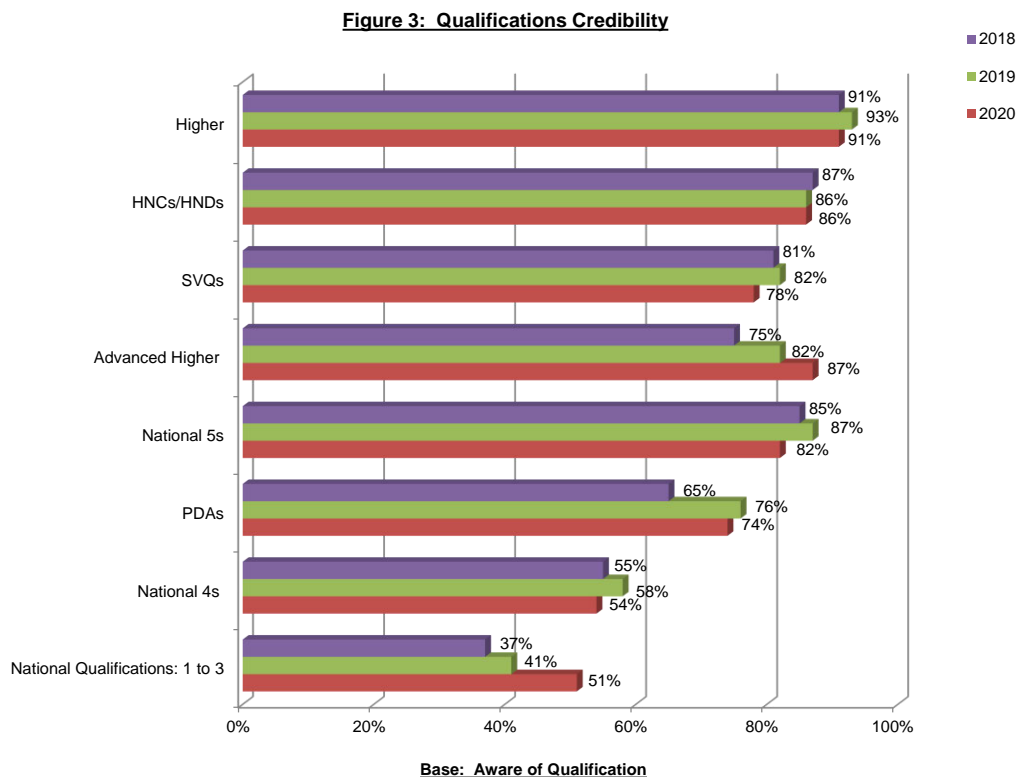
From Figure 3, it can be seen that those qualifications of which respondents were aware in 2020 which were perceived as having the highest credibility were:

- Highers (91%)
- Advanced Highers (87%)
- HNCs/HNDs (86%)
- National 5s (82%)
- SVQs (78%)
- PDAs (74%)

Thereafter, levels of perceived high credibility of two remaining sets of National Qualifications were somewhat lower, i.e.:

- National 4s (54%)
- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (51%)

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Further examination of the data presented in Figure 3 indicated that highest levels of perceived high credibility for each of the qualifications under consideration (of which respondents were aware in 2020) were cited by the audiences noted below (where notable variances were apparent):

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3:  Employers (77%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (69%) and Mature Potential Candidates (67%)

- National 4s:  Employers (79%), Mature Potential Candidates (69%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (60%) and Schools (60%)

- National 5s:  Colleges (92%), Employers (89%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (88%) and Schools (86%)

- Highers:  Colleges (99%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (97%), Mature Potential Candidates (96%), Schools (93%), Parents (91%), Employers (90%) and Young Potential Candidates (87%)

- Advanced Highers:  Intermediate Potential Candidates (98%), Mature Potential Candidates (97%), Colleges (96%), Employers (91%), Schools (85%), Young Potential Candidates (83%) and Parents (79%)

- SVQs: Training Providers (92%), Employers (90%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (90%), Mature Potential Candidates (86%) and Schools (84%)

- HNCs and HNDs: Intermediate Potential Candidates (98%), Mature Potential Candidates (96%), Employers (96%) and Schools (95%)

- PDAs: Employers (89%), Schools (86%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (84%)

It should be noted that levels of perceived low credibility of qualifications were far more limited but most notable in relation to:

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3:  27% overall and highest amongst Colleges (46%)

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- National 4s:  33% overall and highest amongst Colleges (62%)

In both cases, these outcomes are notably higher than those found in 2019, i.e.:

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (27% in 2020 compared to 14% in 2019)
- National 4s (33% in 2020 compared to 15% in 2019)

In the context of the outcomes noted above, it should be noted that, overall, levels of *don't know* responses were highest in relation to the following qualifications for the audiences indicated below:

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3:  22% overall and highest amongst Training Providers (47%) and, thereafter, Schools, Parents and Colleges (32%, 31% and 30% respectively)
- PDAs:  17% overall and highest amongst Colleges (47%) and, thereafter, Parents (27%)

It should also be noted that the overall *don't know* score for National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 in 2020 (22%) was significantly lower than that found in both 2018 and 2019 (55% and 45% respectively).

Figure 3 indicates that, for most of the National Qualifications under consideration, their perceived high credibility changed little between 2019 and 2020, with the most notable change in this regard being the increased perceived high credibility of National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (rising from 41% to 51%).

Thereafter, any other remaining changes were minimal in nature but most notable in terms of increase in the perceived high credibility of Advanced Highers (rising from 82% to 87%).

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Further examination of the data also indicated a number of interesting trends through time in terms of the perceived high credibility of the National Qualifications under consideration, namely:

- Between 2018 and 2020, there has been a notable increase in the perceived high credibility of *Advanced Highers* (rising from 75% to 87%) which, between 2019 and 2020, was primarily driven by Young Potential Candidates, Parents and Training Providers
- Between 2018 and 2020, there has been a significant increase in the perceived high credibility of *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3* (from 37% to 51%) which, between 2019 and 2020, was primarily driven by Young Potential Candidates and Parents
- Between 2019 and 2020, there was little change in the perceived high credibility of *Highers, HNCs/HNDs, SVQs, National 5s, PDAs* and *National 4s*, with this also being the case between 2018 and 2020 with each of these qualifications with the exception of PDAs

*"Have your overall views on the credibility of <u>all</u> of the qualifications you have heard of, taken together, changed over the last year?"*

**<u>Figure 4: Views on Qualification Credibility
Changed?</u>**
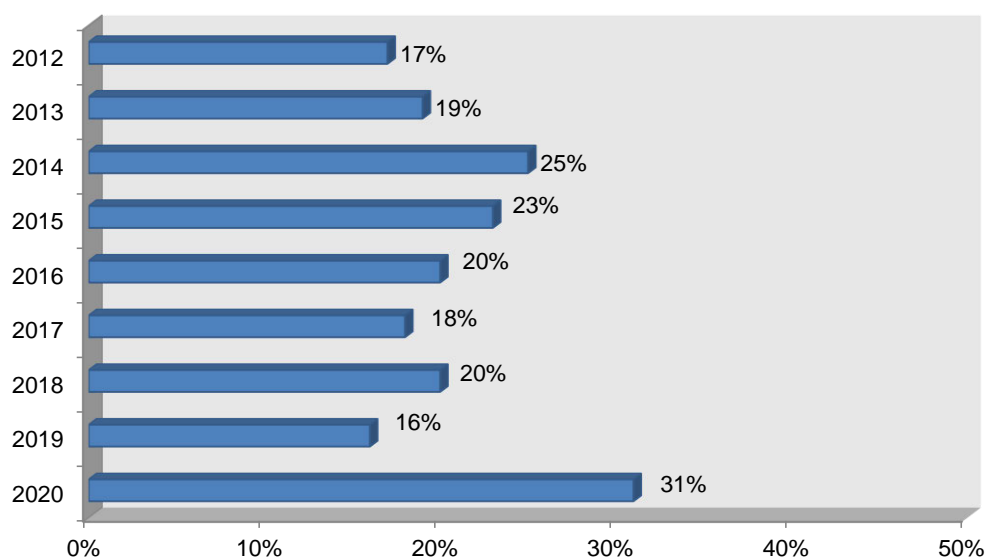


**<u>Base: All Respondents</u>**

Figure 4 indicates that almost a third of respondents in 2020 (31%) stated that their overall views on the credibility of **all** of the qualifications they had heard of – taken together – had changed over the previous year.[3]

This figure is the highest found since 2012 (during which time it ranged from 16% to 25%) and is almost double the outcome found in 2019 (16%).

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 4 indicated that those most likely to state that their views on the credibility of **all** of the qualifications they had heard of – taken together – had changed over the previous year were:

- Parents (55%)
- Young Potential Candidates (44%)
- Colleges (40%)
- Training Providers (39%)
- Schools (38%)

It is also of interest to note that the significant increase in the extent to which views on qualification credibility across all qualifications had changed over the previous year was most notably driven by Young Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges, Schools and Employers.

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[3] It should be noted that this question changed slightly between 2012 and 2013. However, the extent of this change is such that the outcomes are still comparable with those from previous surveys.

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*"Have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become more or less positive?"*

**Figure 5:  Ways in Which Views On Qualification Credibility Have Changed?**
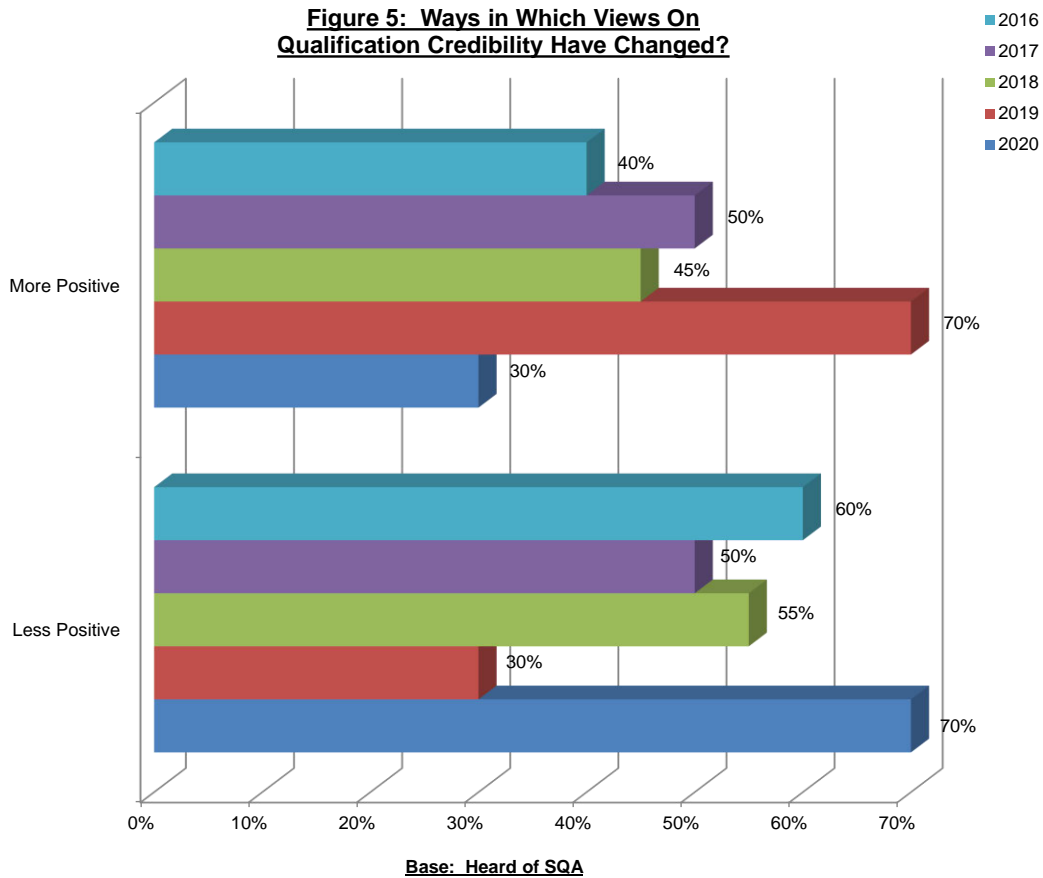


Figure 5 indicates that, in 2020 – amongst those whose views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had changed over the previous year – around a third (30%) stated that their views had become **more positive**.  This outcome continues to reflect a notable degree of variability which has been apparent in this regard through time, is the lowest figure found since 2016 (which was 40% at that time) and is very significantly lower than that found in 2019 (70%).

It should be noted that the subsample of respondents here is insufficient to provide a statistically robust profile of outcomes by target audience.

From Figure 5, it can also be seen that over two thirds of respondents in 2020 whose views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had changed over the previous year (70%) stated that their views had become **less positive**. Again, this outcome continues to be indicative of a notable degree of variance which has been apparent in this regard through time, is the highest found since 2016 (at which time the outcome found was 60%) and is very significantly higher than that found in 2019 (30%).

*"In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become _less positive_?"*

**Figure 6:  Ways in Which Views Have Become Less Positive - Indicative (2020)**



**Base:  Views Less Positive**

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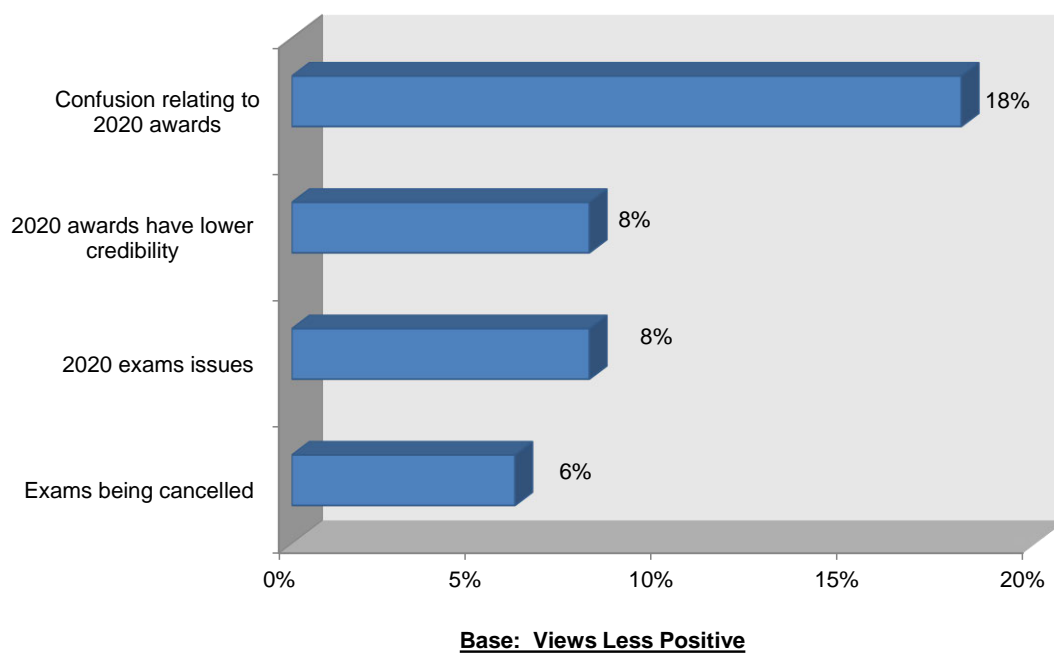
It should be noted that the subsample of respondents whose views about the credibility of Scottish qualifications had become <u>more positive</u> is insufficient to allow the outcomes to a follow-up question – *"In what ways have your views about the overall credibility of these qualifications become more positive?"* – to allow its outcomes to be presented[4].

The data presented in Figure 6 is also somewhat indicative in nature[5]. Nonetheless, it is of interest to note from Figure 6 that the principal factor to emerge here which resulted in these respondents' views becoming less positive was that of *confusion relating to the 2020 awards* (18%), with some indicative unprompted mention also being made here of:

- A belief that the 2020 awards have lower credibility than previous awards (8%)
- The 2020 exams issues (8%)
- Exams being cancelled (6%)

Table 1 provides a historical profile in terms of factors noted in respect of views regarding the credibility of Scottish qualifications becoming less positive between 2018 and 2020[6].

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[4] This is a function of two factors, i.e. the relatively low proportion of respondents whose views had become more positive and only a proportion of these respondents completing the follow up question in the online questionnaires which was asked on an unprompted basis.

[5] This is a function of only a proportion of these respondents completing the follow up question in the online questionnaires which was asked on an unprompted basis.

[6] It should be noted that, within Table 1, the term *not mentioned/little mention* is used on many occasions. This is due to the fact that any factor for which this was cited had been mentioned in previous phases of the Tracking Research.

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**Table 1: Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2018 to 2020**

| Factor | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Media coverage | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Lower standards | Primary Factor | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Qualifications less credible | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Too much change | Primary Factor | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Qualifications less valuable | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Too many qualifications | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Financial cutbacks in education | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Qualifications don't lead to jobs | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Exams too easy to pass | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Qualifications confusing | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Schools not ready for new qualifications | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Workload for teachers | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Teachers unhappy | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| National 4 qualifications lack credibility | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Confusion regarding changes to qualifications | Primary Factor | Secondary Factor | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Government interference in education | Not mentioned/ little mention | Primary Factor | Not mentioned/ little mention |
| Introduction of National Qualifications was rushed | Not mentioned/ little mention | Secondary Factor | Not mentioned/ little mention |

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| Factor | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Confusion relating to 2020 awards | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Primary Factor |
| 2020 awards have lower credibility | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Secondary Factor |
| 2020 exam results | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Secondary Factor |
| Exams being cancelled | Not mentioned/ little mention | Not mentioned/ little mention | Secondary Factor |

Table 1 highlights a number of variations which have been apparent between 2018 and 2020 in terms of factors which had contributed to respondent views about the credibility of Scottish secondary education qualifications becoming less positive, namely:

- *Lower standards* and *too much change* which were cited as primary factors in 2018 were not cited in either 2019 or 2020

- *Confusion regarding changes to qualifications* which was a primary factor in 2018 and a secondary factor in 2019 was not mentioned or had little mention in 2020

- *Government interference in education* which was a primary factor in 2019 was not mentioned or had little mention in 2020

- *Confusion relating to 2020 awards* which was not mentioned in 2018 and 2019 was a primary factor in 2020

- *2020 awards having lower credibility, 2020 exam results* and *exams being cancelled* were not mentioned in 2018 and 2019 but were secondary factors in 2020

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## 4.0 SQA PROFILE

*"Have you heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority – also known as the SQA?"*

**Figure 7: SQA Awareness**



Base: All Respondents
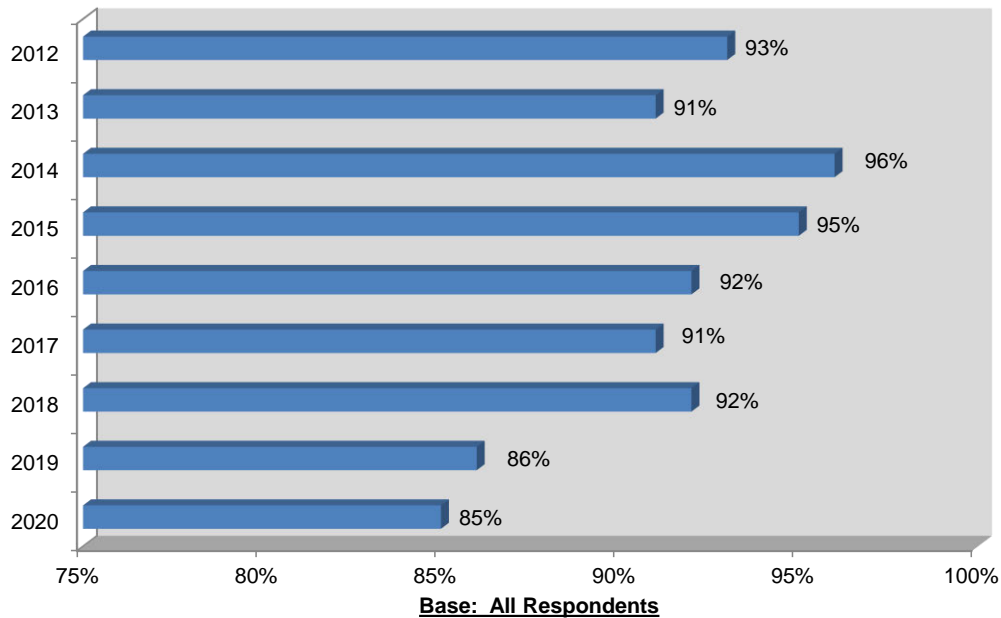
Figure 7 indicates that well over 4 out of 5 respondents in 2020 (85%) stated that they had heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority. This outcome is almost identical to that found in 2019 (86%) but continues to be slightly lower than those found between 2012 and 2018 (ranging from 91% to 96%).

Further examination of the data indicated that awareness of SQA was highest amongst the Professional Audiences, Parents and Young Potential Candidates and lowest amongst Intermediate Potential Candidates and Mature Potential Candidates, i.e.:

- Colleges (100%)
- Schools (100%)
- Training Providers (99%)
- Employers (96%)
- Parents (87%)
- Young Potential Candidates (78%)

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- Intermediate Potential Candidates (59%)

- Mature Potential Candidates (52%)

It is of interest to note that, although – overall – the outcomes were almost identical in 2019 and 2020, during that time there was a decreasing reference amongst both Young Potential Candidates and Intermediate Potential Candidates of being aware of SQA, but an increasing reference in this regard amongst Parents.

*"Do you think you know enough about the SQA?"*

**Figure 8: Enough Known About the SQA?**

| Year | % |
|------|------|
| 2012 | 73% |
| 2013 | 77% |
| 2014 | 63% |
| 2015 | 76% |
| 2016 | 70% |
| 2017 | 71% |
| 2018 | 80% |
| 2019 | 74% |
| 2020 | 74% |

**Base: Heard of SQA**
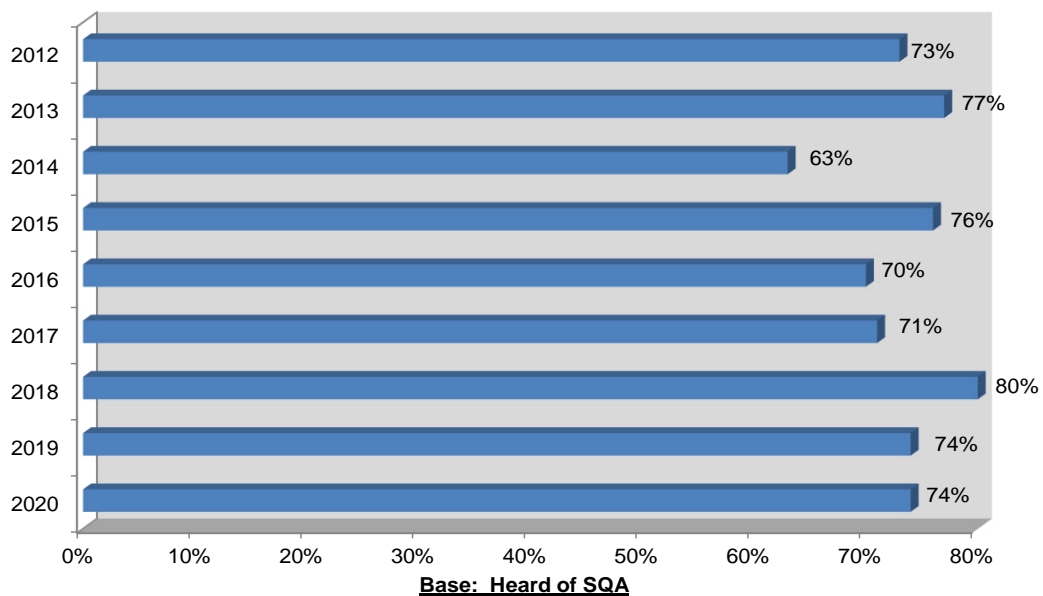
From Figure 8, it can be seen that three quarters of respondents in 2020 – who were aware of SQA (74%) – believed that they *knew enough about* the Authority. This outcome is identical to that found in 2019 and is broadly in line with the outcomes found in most other survey phases since 2012 (with the exception being 2014, at which time 63% of respondents here stated their belief that they knew enough about SQA).

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 8 indicated that, in 2020, perceptions that *enough was known about SQA* were highest amongst Schools, Training Providers and Colleges and lowest amongst Parents, i.e.:

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- Schools (91%)

- Training Providers (91%)

- Colleges (86%)

- Mature Potential Candidates (70%)

- Intermediate Potential Candidates (67%)

- Young Potential Candidates (65%)

- Employers (61%)

- Parents (45%)

It is of interest to note that, although the overall outcomes here were identical in 2019 and 2020, during that time there was a notable decrease in the extent to which Employers stated their belief that they knew enough about SQA.

*"How would you rate the current credibility of the SQA?"*

**Figure 9: SQA Credibility**



Legend: 2018, 2019, 2020

High:
- 81% (2018)
- 83% (2019)
- 61% (2020)

Low:
- 5% (2018)
- 3% (2019)
- 29% (2020)

Don't know:
- 14% (2018)
- 14% (2019)
- 10% (2020)

**Base: Heard of SQA**

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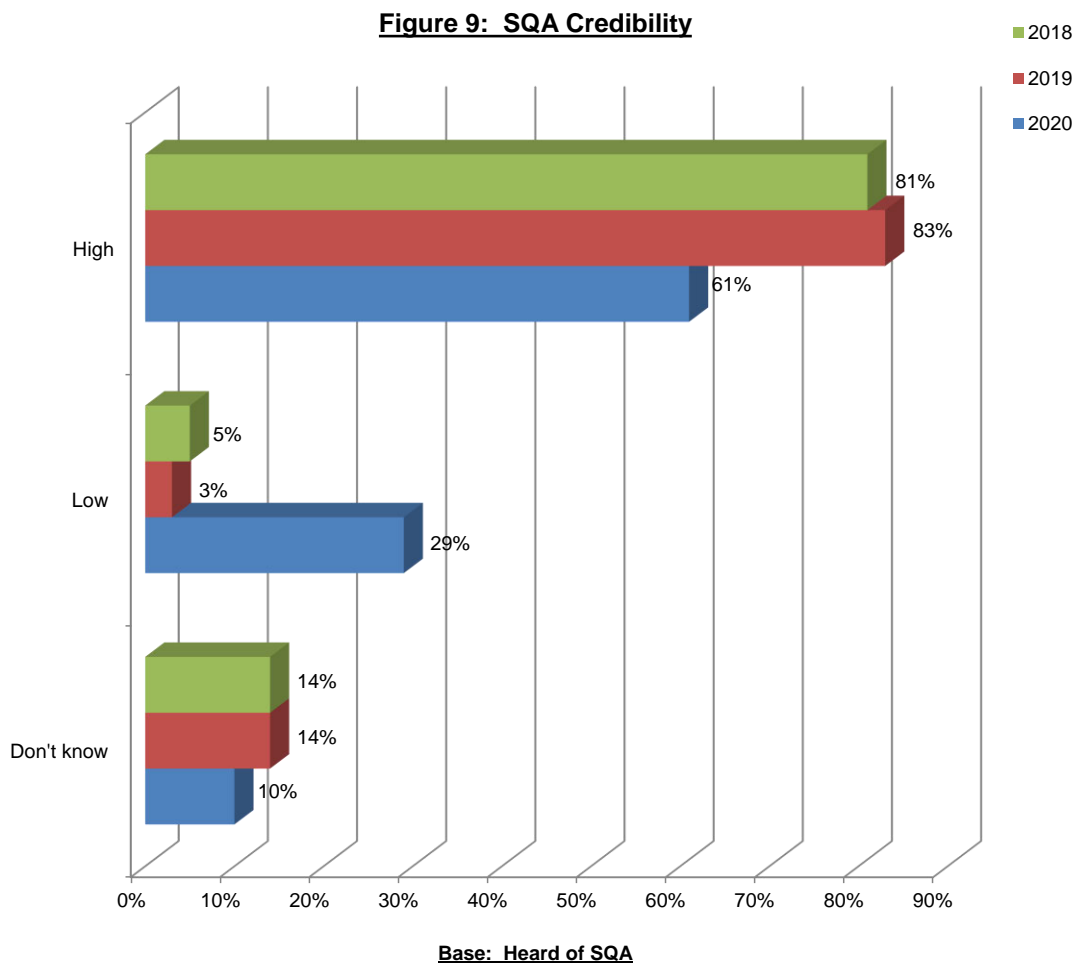
Figure 9 indicates that 3 out of 5 respondents aware of SQA in 2020 (61%) believed the Authority to have high credibility. This outcome is significantly lower than that found in both 2018 and 2019 (81% and 83% respectively) and, indeed, notably reverses a rise which had been apparent in this regard since 2017 (at which time around three quarters of those aware of SQA – 73% – believed the Authority to have high credibility).

Indeed, it should be stressed that the decline in the perceived credibility of SQA between 2019 and 2020 was driven by almost all audiences and, in particular, Young Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers.

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 9 indicated that perceptions of high SQA credibility in 2020 were highest amongst Training Providers, Intermediate Potential Candidates and Employers and lowest amongst Parents, i.e.:

- Training Providers (84%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (73%)
- Employers (72%)
- Mature Potential Candidates (59%)
- Young Potential Candidates (55%)
- Schools (52%)
- Colleges (50%)
- Parents (40%)

It can also be seen from Figure 9 that almost 3 out of 10 respondents in 2020 (29%) believed the Authority to have low credibility. This represents a very significant rise since both 2018 and 2019 (from 5% and 3% respectively) and notably reverses a downward trend which had been apparent in this regard since 2016 (at which time 1 in 10 respondents – 10% – believed SQA to have low credibility).

Indeed, it should be stressed that the increasing perceptions of low credibility of SQA were driven by almost all audiences and, in particular, by Young Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges and Training Providers.

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 9 also indicated that most notable levels of perceived low credibility were apparent amongst Parents, Colleges and Schools and least apparent amongst Training Providers, Intermediate Potential Candidates and Employers, i.e.:

- Parents (49%)
- Colleges (45%)
- Schools (44%)
- Young Potential Candidates (36%)
- Mature Potential Candidates (23%)
- Training Providers (14%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (12%)
- Employers (7%)

Finally, from Figure 9, it can be seen that 1 in 10 respondents in 2020 (10%) provided a *can't say* response in relation to perceived credibility of SQA, with this outcome being broadly in line with those found in both 2018 and 2019 (both 14%) and the outcome in 2020 being highest amongst Employers, Mature Potential Candidates and Intermediate Potential Candidates, i.e.:

- Employers (20%)
- Mature Potential Candidates (18%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (15%)

*"Why did you provide this rating?"*

**Figure 10:  Reason for Providing High Rating of SQA Credibility
(Unprompted) - 2020**
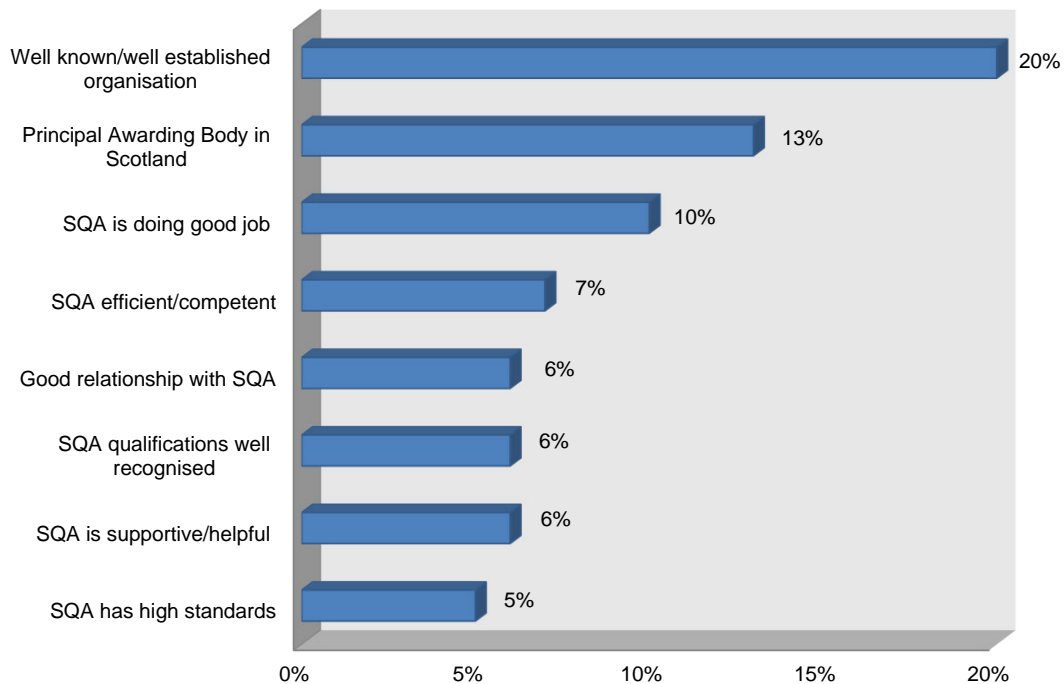
From Figure 10, it can be seen that, when those stating their belief that SQA has high credibility were asked – on an unprompted basis – why they believed this to be the case, their **primary responses** focused around *SQA being a well-known and well-established organisation* (20%), with **secondary mention** being made here of:

- SQA being the principal awarding body in Scotland (13%)
- SQA *doing a good job* (10%)

Thereafter, unprompted mention was made of a range of **other reasons** for believing SQA to have high credibility, including:

- A belief that SQA is *efficient and/or competent* (7%)
- Respondents having a good relationship with SQA (6%)
- SQA qualifications being well recognised (6%)
- SQA being supportive and/or helpful (6%)

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- SQA having high standards (5%)

When the outcomes noted in Figure 10 were examined further, a number of notable variances were apparent, particularly in terms of the following responses being most likely to be provided by the respondent types indicated (where notable variances are apparent):

- <u>SQA being a well-known/well-established organisation</u>: Employers (29%), Training Providers (25%) and Schools (22%)
- <u>SQA being the principal awarding body in Scotland</u>:  Parents (28%)
- <u>SQA doing a good job</u>: Parents (20%)
- <u>A belief that SQA is efficient and/or competent</u>:  Employers (12%)
- <u>Respondents having a good relationship with SQA</u>: Colleges and Training Providers (14% and 13% respectively)
- <u>SQA qualifications being well recognised</u>:  Schools (15%)
- <u>SQA being supportive and/or helpful</u>:  Training Providers (16%)

*"Why did you provide this rating?"*

**Figure 11:  Reason for Providing Low Rating of SQA Credibility (Unprompted) - Highly Indicative (2020)**
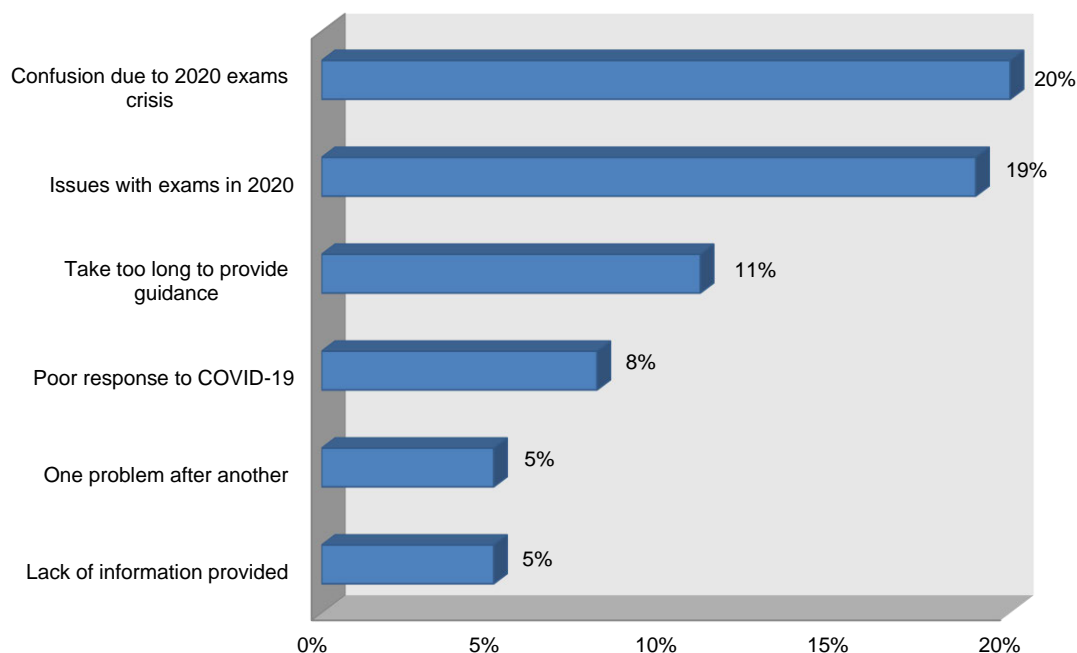


**Base:  Very Low/Fairly Low in Figure 9**

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Although indicative in nature, Figure 11 indicates that, when respondents who believed SQA to have low credibility were asked – again, on an unprompted basis – why they believed this to be the case, the **principal factors** to emerge were those of:

- Confusion due to the 2020 exams crisis (20%)
- Issues with exams in 2020 (19%)

*"How strongly would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about SQA?"*

**Figure 12:  SQA Profile - Agree/Agree + Strongly Agree**



Legend: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Can be trusted: 91%, 82%, 86%, 86%, 87%, 62%

Enabling organisation: 72%, 71%, 66%, 72%, 75%, 50%

Progressive organisation: 75%, 73%, 66%, 70%, 72%, 48%
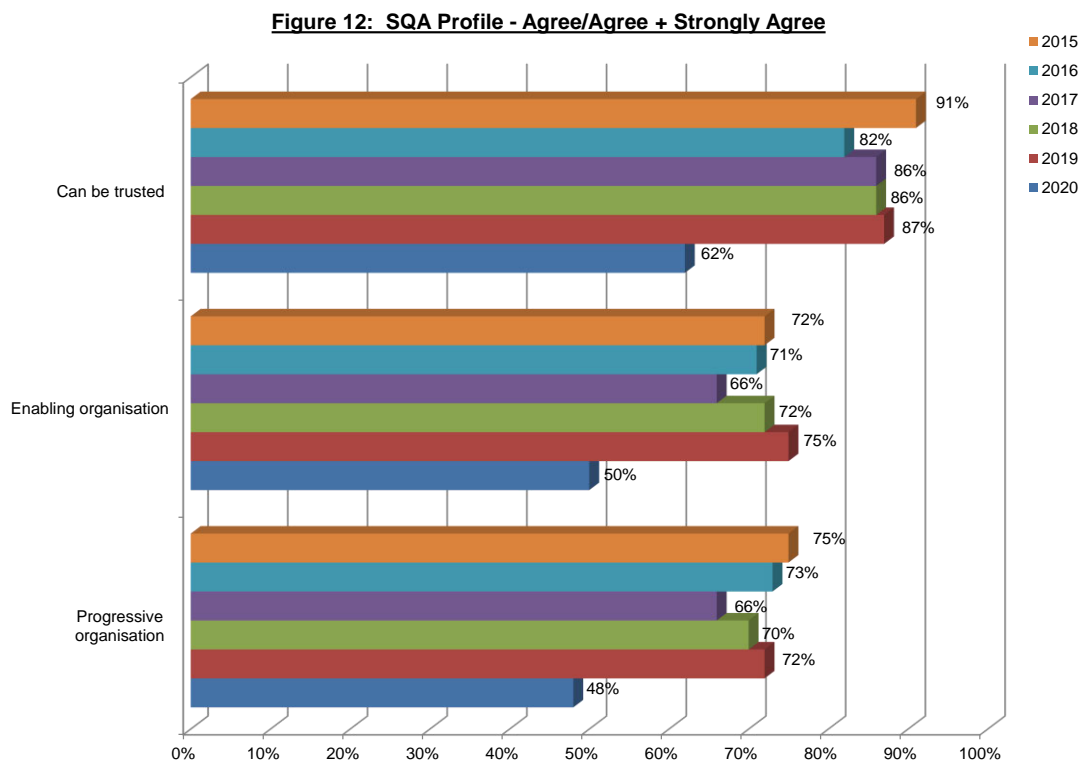
**Base:  All Respondents**

As has been the case over a number of survey phases, respondents in 2020 were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with three statements about SQA.  In 2014 and 2015, this question was only asked of the Professional Audiences (i.e. Schools, Colleges, Training Providers and Employers).  Accordingly, the data presented in Figures 12 to 15 is only directly comparable for 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 when this question was asked of **all** audiences (i.e. including

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Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates and Parents).

Bearing this in mind, Figure 12 indicates that, in 2020, around 3 out of 5 respondents (62%) agreed that SQA *can be trusted*, with this applying to around half of respondents in relation to SQA *enabling organisations to carry out their roles more effectively* and *being a progressive organisation* (50% and 48% respectively).

Further examination of the data for 2020 here indicated that <u>agreement</u> with each of these statements was highest amongst the audiences noted below:

- <u>SQA is a progressive organisation</u>: Intermediate Potential Candidates (70%), Training Providers (69%), Mature Potential Candidates (68%) and Employers (54%)
- <u>SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively</u>: Intermediate Potential Candidates (72%), Training Providers (68%), Mature Potential Candidates (63%), Employers (58%) and Young Potential Candidates (48%)
- <u>SQA can be trusted</u>: Employers (81%), Training Providers (80%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (79%) and Mature Potential Candidates (66%)

It can be seen from Figure 12 that the positive outcomes for each of these three statements are significantly lower than those found between 2015 and 2019, with these declines between 2019 and 2020 being **primarily** driven by the audiences indicated:

- <u>SQA is a progressive organisation</u>: Young Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges, Schools and Employers
- <u>SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively</u>: Young Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers

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- SQA can be trusted: Young Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers

**Figure 13: SQA Profile - Strongly Agree**
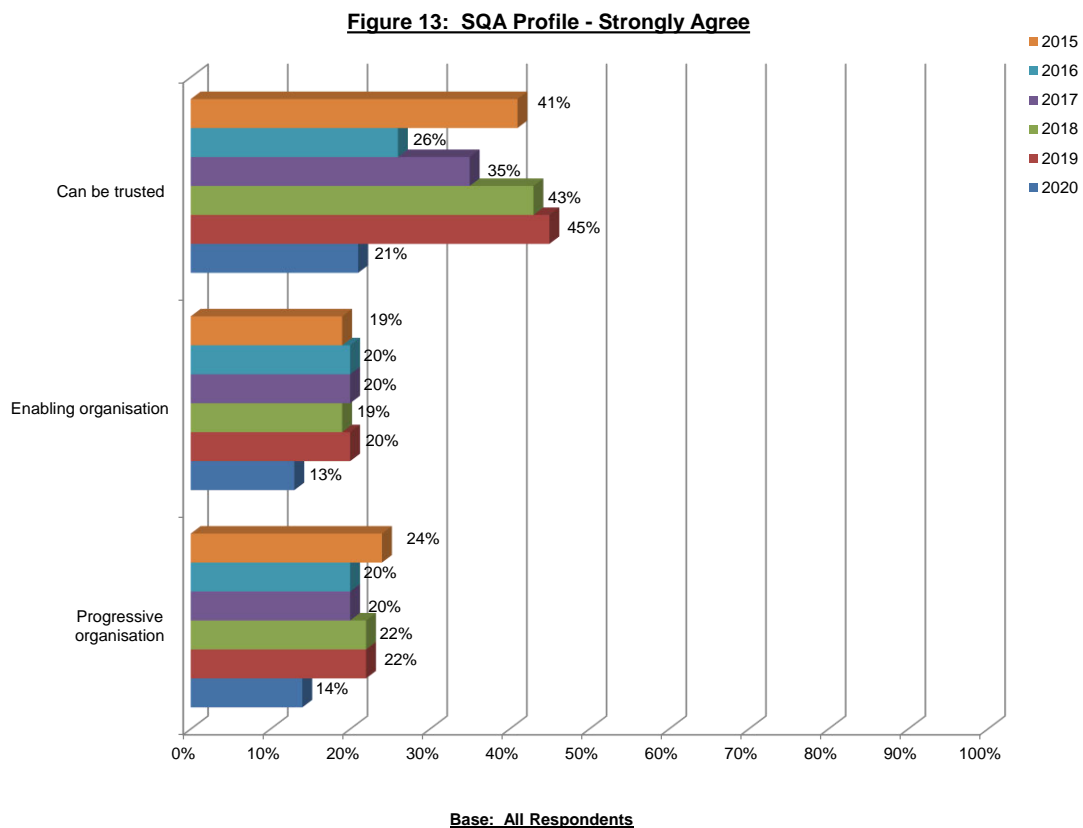
Figure 13 indicates that around 1 in 5 respondents in 2020 (21%) strongly agreed with the statement that SQA *can be trusted.* This figure is significantly lower than those found in 4 out of the last 5 survey phases and compares particularly badly to the outcome in 2019 (45%).

Figure 13 also indicates that a relatively low proportion of respondents in 2020 specifically strongly agreed that SQA *is a progressive organisation* and *enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively* (14% and 13% respectively). Again, these figures are lower than those found in both cases between 2015 and 2019.

Further examination of the data for 2020 here indicated that strong agreement with each of these statements was highest amongst the respondent types noted below:

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- <u>SQA is a progressive organisation</u>: Intermediate Potential Candidates (37%), Mature Potential Candidates (28%) and Young Potential Candidates (20%)

- <u>SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively</u>: Intermediate Potential Candidates (37%) and Mature Potential Candidates (25%)

- <u>SQA can be trusted</u>: Intermediate Potential Candidates (47%), Training Providers (29%), Mature Potential Candidates (28%), Employers (24%) and Young Potential Candidates (20%)

**Figure 14:  SQA Profile - Disagree & Strongly Disgree**
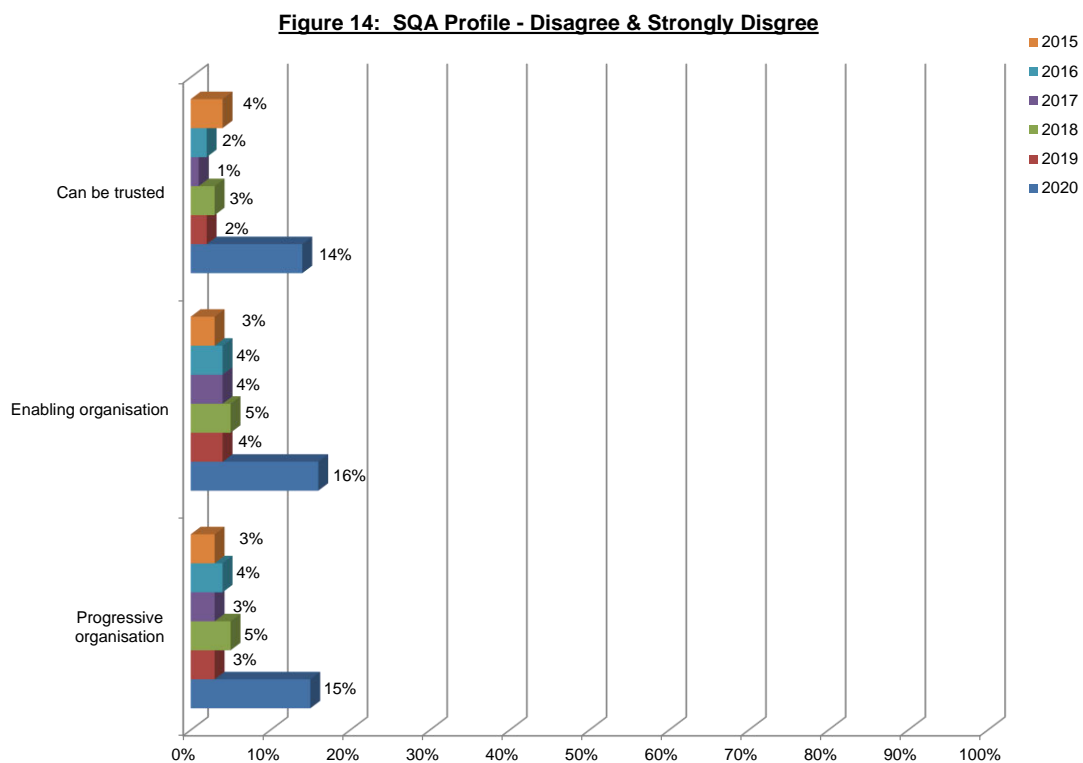


**Base:  All Respondents**

Figure 14 indicates that between 1 in 6 and 1 in 7 respondents in 2020 (ranging from 14% to 16%) <u>disagreed</u> with each of the statements under consideration.  These figures are significantly higher than those found between 2015 and 2019, during which time very few respondents disagreed with each of these statements (i.e. 1% to 5%).

It should also be noted that levels of disagreement with each of these three statements were highest amongst the respondent types noted below:

- <u>SQA is a progressive organisation</u>: Schools (29%), Colleges (25%), Mature Potential Candidates (19%) and Parents (17%)

- <u>SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively</u>: Colleges (31%), Schools (26%), Mature Potential Candidates (20%) and Parents (15%)

- <u>SQA can be trusted</u>: Parents (26%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (22%) and Colleges (22%)

**Figure 15:  SQA Profile - Don't Know**



**Base:  All Respondents**
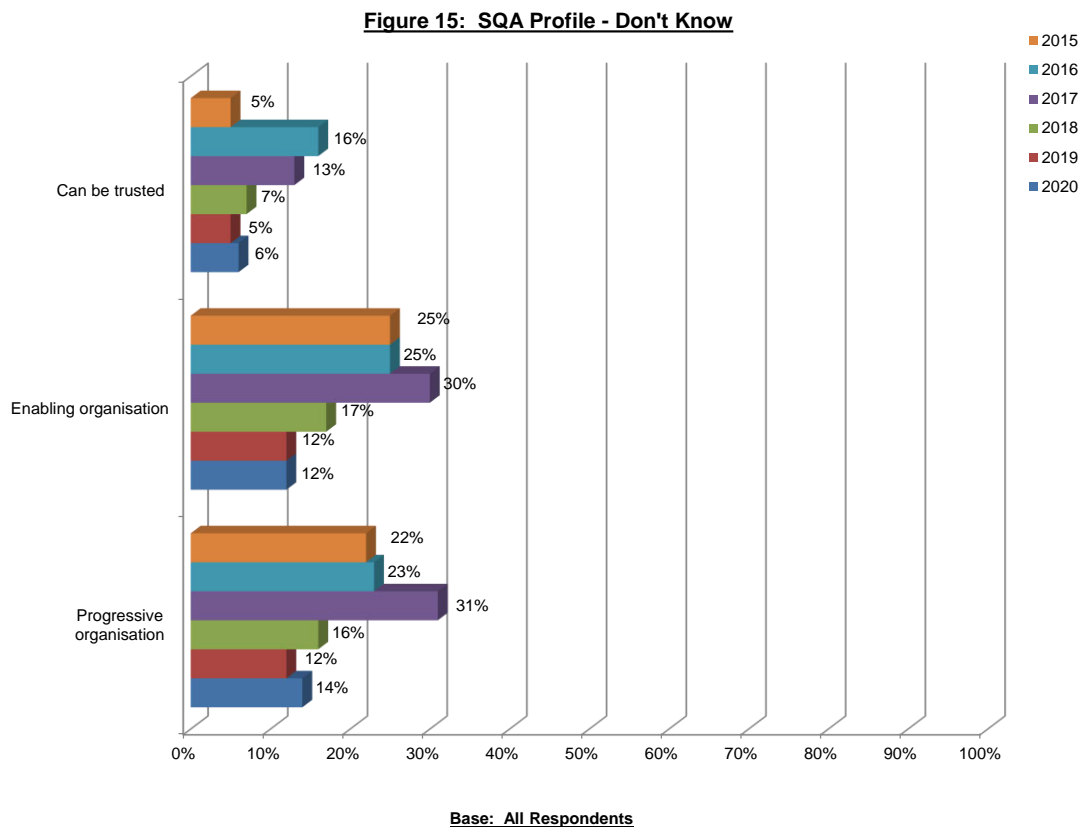
Finally, Figure 15 indicates that levels of *don't know* responses to this question were relatively limited in 2020, particularly in terms of agreement that SQA *can be trusted* (6%).  Indeed, the outcomes here for 2020 are broadly in line with those found in both 2018 and 2019 across all three statements.

Further examination of the data here indicated that levels of *don't know* responses were highest amongst Employers and Parents, i.e.:

- SQA is a progressive organisation: Employers (37%) and Parents (24%)

- SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively: Employers (31%) and Parents (25%)

- SQA can be trusted: Employers (14%) and Parents (11%)

## 5.0    KEY MESSAGES FOR SQA

### 5.1    National Qualifications Profile

1. Levels of awareness of National Qualifications continue to be high, albeit that there has been a slight decline in awareness of some qualifications over the last year or two.

2. A notable majority of those aware of a qualification believed that they knew enough about it and, indeed, that there has been an improvement in this regard in relation to National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3.

### 5.2    Credibility of Scottish Qualifications

3. The perceived high credibility of qualifications of which respondents were aware has remained relatively consistent in recent times and, indeed, has improved notably over the past few years in respect of National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3.

4. The extent to which respondent views about the credibility of all qualifications they had heard of – taken together – had changed over the previous year was significantly higher than that found in previous survey phases and, despite perceptions of high qualification credibility being high at an individual level – as noted above – at a collective level, for those whose views had changed, they had tended to become more negative, primarily due to a range of concerns and issues relating to assessment in 2020.

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### 5.3    SQA Profile

5. Awareness of SQA continues to be high, as does the extent of beliefs amongst those participating in the research that they know enough about the Authority.

6. However, despite most of those participating in the research in 2020 believing SQA to have high credibility, this was to a far lesser extent than has been the case over many years.  It is, however, anticipated that SQA's perceived credibility will be restored to previous levels once education returns to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. Perceived levels of low credibility of SQA were notable in 2020, particularly compared to the very minimal levels of low credibility noted over many years.  Again, however, it is anticipated that this situation is likely to be reversed quickly after the pandemic.

8. SQA's profile has suffered in terms of the extent to which it is seen as being an organisation that can be trusted, is an enabling organisation and is a progressive organisation, with the levels of belief in each of these attributes being considerably lower in 2020 than they have been over many years.

9. In addition, lack of belief in each of these three SQA attributes increased compared to their very minimal citing over many years. Despite this, however, relatively few of those participating in the research in 2020 did not associate SQA with each of these attributes.  It is believed that these changes will be reversed soon after the pandemic is resolved and education returns to normal.

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*APPENDIX I*

*2020 CORE QUESTIONS*

## SCHOOLS QUESTIONNAIRE

13. Have you heard of each of the qualifications listed below?  If so, do you think you know enough about the qualifications that you have heard of and how would you rate their credibility?  **(Please tick appropriate boxes)**

| | Heard of qualification | | Enough known about qualification | | Credibility of qualification | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Very High | Fairly High | Fairly Low | Very Low | Can't Say |
| Highers | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| Advanced Highers | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 1s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 2s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 3s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 4s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 5s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| HNCs & HNDs | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| Professional Development Awards or PDAs | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| SVQs | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |

14. Have your overall views on the credibility of <u>all</u> of the qualifications you have heard of taken together changed over the last year? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes – my views have become more positive | ❒ | Now go to Q15 |
| Yes – my views have become less positive | ❒ | Now go to Q16 |
| No | ❒ | Now go to Q17 |

15. In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>more positive</u>? **(Please type in below)**

| |
|---|
| |

**Now go to Q17**

16. In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>less positive</u>? **(Please type in below)**

| |
|---|
| |

17. Have you heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (also known as the SQA)? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | ❒ | Now go to Q18 |
| No | ❒ | Now go to Q23 |

18. Do you think that you know enough about the SQA? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | ❒ |
| No | ❒ |

19. How would you rate the current credibility of the SQA? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Very High | ❒ | Now go to Q20 |
| Fairly High | ❒ | Now go to Q20 |
| Fairly Low | ❒ | Now go to Q21 |
| Very Low | ❒ | Now go to Q21 |
| Can't Say | ❒ | Now go to Q22 |

20. Why did you provide this rating? **(Please type in below)**

| |
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| |

**Now go to Q22**

21. Why did you provide this rating?  **(Please type in below)**

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22. How strongly would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the SQA?  **(Please tick appropriate boxes)**

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The SQA is a progressive organisation | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| The SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| The SQA can be trusted | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |

**COLLEGES QUESTIONNAIRE**

15.    Have you heard of each of the qualifications listed below?  If so, do you think you know enough about the qualifications that you have heard of and how would you rate their credibility?  **(Please tick appropriate boxes)**

| | Heard of qualification | | Enough known about qualification | | Credibility of qualification | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Very High | Fairly High | Fairly Low | Very Low | Can't Say |
| Highers | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| Advanced Highers | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 1s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 2s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 3s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 4s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| National 5s | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| HNCs & HNDs | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| Professional Development Awards or PDAs | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |
| SVQs | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ | ❐ |

16. Have your overall views on the credibility of <u>all</u> of the qualifications you have heard of taken together changed over the last year? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes – my views have become more positive | ❒ | Now go to Q17 |
| Yes – my views have become less positive | ❒ | Now go to Q18 |
| No | ❒ | Now go to Q19 |

17. In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>more positive</u>? **(Please type in below)**

|  |
|---|
|  |

**Now go to Q19**

18. In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>less positive</u>? **(Please type in below)**

|  |
|---|
|  |

19. Have you heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (also known as the SQA)? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | ❒ | Now go to Q20 |
| No | ❒ | Now go to Q25 |

20. Do you think that you know enough about the SQA? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | ❒ |
| No | ❒ |

21. How would you rate the current credibility of the SQA? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Very High | ❒ | Now go to Q22 |
| Fairly High | ❒ | Now go to Q22 |
| Fairly Low | ❒ | Now go to Q23 |
| Very Low | ❒ | Now go to Q23 |
| Can't Say | ❒ | Now go to Q24 |

22. Why did you provide this rating? **(Please type in below)**

|  |
|---|
|  |

**Now go to Q24**

23. Why did you provide this rating?  **(Please type in below)**

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24. How strongly would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the SQA?  **(Please tick appropriate boxes)**

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The SQA is a progressive organisation | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ |
| The SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ |
| The SQA can be trusted | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ |

**TRAINING PROVIDERS QUESTIONNAIRE**

11.  Have you heard of each of the qualifications listed below?  If so, do you think you know enough about the qualifications that you have heard of and how would you rate their credibility?  **(Please tick appropriate boxes)**

| | Heard of qualification | | Enough known about qualification | | Credibility of qualification | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Very High | Fairly High | Fairly Low | Very Low | Can't Say |
| Highers | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Advanced Highers | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| National 1s | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| National 2s | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| National 3s | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| National 4s | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| National 5s | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| HNCs & HNDs | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Professional Development Awards or PDAs | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| SVQs | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

12. Have your overall views on the credibility of <u>all</u> of the qualifications you have heard of taken together changed over the last year? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes – my views have become more positive | ❑ | Now go to Q13 |
| Yes – my views have become less positive | ❑ | Now go to Q14 |
| No | ❑ | Now go to Q15 |

13. In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>more positive</u>? **(Please type in below)**

|  |
|---|
|  |

**Now go to Q15**

14. In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>less positive</u>? **(Please type in below)**

|  |
|---|
|  |

15. Have you heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (also known as the SQA)? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | ❑ | Now go to Q16 |
| No | ❑ | Interview finishes |

16. Do you think that you know enough about the SQA? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | ❑ |
| No | ❑ |

17. How would you rate the current credibility of the SQA? **(Please tick appropriate box)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Very High | ❑ | Now go to Q18 |
| Fairly High | ❑ | Now go to Q18 |
| Fairly Low | ❑ | Now go to Q19 |
| Very Low | ❑ | Now go to Q19 |
| Can't Say | ❑ | Now go to Q20 |

18. Why did you provide this rating? **(Please type in below)**

|  |
|---|
|  |

**Now go to Q20**

19. Why did you provide this rating?  **(Please type in below)**

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20. How strongly would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the SQA?  **(Please tick appropriate boxes)**

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The SQA is a progressive organisation | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ |
| The SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ |
| The SQA can be trusted | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ | ❒ |

**EMPLOYERS QUESTIONNAIRE**

2. Have you heard of the following qualifications? **(Code in Col Q2)**

3. Do you think you know enough about these qualifications? **(Code in Col Q3 - only for 'Yes' in Q2)**

4. How would you rate the credibility of these qualifications? **(Code in Col Q4 - only for 'Yes' in Q2)**

| | Col Q2 | | Col Q3 | | Col Q4 | | | | | Route |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No | Very High | Fairly High | Fairly Low | Very Low | Can't Say | |
| Highers | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Advanced Highers | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| National 1s | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| National 2s | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| National 3s | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| National 4s | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| National 5s | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| HNCs & HNDs | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Professional Development Awards or PDAs | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| SVQs | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Q5 |

5.  Have your overall views on the credibility of <u>all</u> of the qualifications you have heard of taken together changed over the last year?

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes – my views have become more positive | 1 | Q6 |
| Yes – my views have become less positive | 2 | Q7 |
| No | 3 | Q8 |

6.  In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>more positive</u>? **(Probe Fully.  Do Not Prompt)**

<u>Route</u>

_____
_____
_____  Q8

7.  In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>less positive</u>? **(Probe Fully.  Do Not Prompt)**

<u>Route</u>

_____
_____
_____  Q8

8.  Have you heard of Developing the Young workforce – also known as DYW?

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 1 | Q9 |
| No | 2 | Q10 |

9.  How would you describe your level of knowledge and understanding of DYW?

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Very well developed | 1 | Q10 |
| Fairly well developed | 2 | Q10 |
| Fairly poorly developed | 3 | Q10 |
| Very poorly developed | 4 | Q10 |

10. **_Researcher, read out statement:_** _"Developing the Young Workforce is a Scottish Government initiative to reduce youth unemployment by creating a world-class vocational education system."_  How relevant would you say DYW is to your organisation?

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Very relevant | 1 | Q11 |
| Fairly relevant | 2 | Q11 |
| Of little/no relevance | 3 | Q11 |
| Don't know | 4 | Q11 |

11. If you wanted to find out more about DYW, where would you go to source this information? **(Code all that apply)**

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| SQA | 1 |  |
| Scottish Government | 1 |  |
| Education Scotland (formerly LTS and HMIE) | 1 |  |
| A Local Authority | 1 |  |
| The Scotsman | 1 |  |
| The Herald | 1 |  |
| A local school or schools | 1 |  |
| A local college or colleges | 1 |  |
| National Parent Forum of Scotland | 1 |  |
| Scottish Parents Teacher Council | 1 |  |
| TESS | 1 |  |
| Child's school website | 1 |  |
| Child or other family member | 1 |  |
| Friends | 1 |  |
| Glow website | 1 |  |
| GTCS's Teaching Scotland Magazine | 1 |  |
| Trade Union newsletters | 1 |  |
| Other (specify)<br>_____ | 1 | Q12 |

12. Have you heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (also known as the SQA)?

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 1 | Q13 |
| No | 2 | Q26 |

13. Do you think that you know enough about the SQA?

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 1 | Q14 |
| No | 2 | Q14 |

14. How would you rate the current credibility of the SQA?

|  |  | Route |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Very High | 1 | Q15 |
| Fairly High | 2 | Q15 |
| Fairly Low | 3 | Q16 |
| Very Low | 4 | Q16 |
| Can't Say | 5 | Q17 |

15. Why did you provide this rating? **(Probe Fully. Do Not Prompt)**

Route

_____
_____
_____ Q17

16. Why did you provide this rating? **(Probe Fully. Do Not Prompt)**

Route

_____
_____
_____ Q17

17. Have you contacted the SQA?

|  |  | Route |
|---|---|---|
| Yes – within the last year | 1 | Q18 |
| Yes – within the last 1-2 years | 2 | Q18 |
| Yes – more than 2 years ago | 3 | Q18 |
| No | 4 | Q21 |

18. Overall, how would you rate the contact or contacts you made with the SQA on a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' is 'very poor' and '10' is 'very good'?

|  |  | Route |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Q19 |
| 2 | 2 | Q19 |
| 3 | 3 | Q19 |
| 4 | 4 | Q19 |
| 5 | 5 | Q19 |
| 6 | 6 | Q20 |
| 7 | 7 | Q20 |
| 8 | 8 | Q20 |
| 9 | 9 | Q20 |
| 10 | 10 | Q20 |

19. Why did you choose this rating number? **(Probe Fully.  Do Not Prompt)**

Route

_____

_____

_____ Q21

20. Why did you choose this rating number? **(Probe Fully.  Do Not Prompt)**

Route

_____

_____

_____ Q21

21. Have you had contact <u>from</u> the SQA?

|  |  | Route |
|---|---|---|
| Yes – within the last year | 1 | Q22 |
| Yes – within the last 1-2 years | 2 | Q22 |
| Yes – more than 2 years ago | 3 | Q22 |
| No | 4 | Q25 |

22. Overall, how would you rate the contact or contacts you had from the SQA on a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' is 'very poor' and '10' is 'very good'?

|  |  | Route |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | Q23 |
| 2 | 2 | Q23 |
| 3 | 3 | Q23 |
| 4 | 4 | Q23 |
| 5 | 5 | Q23 |
| 6 | 6 | Q24 |
| 7 | 7 | Q24 |
| 8 | 8 | Q24 |
| 9 | 9 | Q24 |
| 10 | 10 | Q24 |

23. Why did you choose this rating number?  **(Probe Fully.  Do Not Prompt)**

_____
_____
_____

24. Why did you choose this rating number?  **(Probe Fully.  Do Not Prompt)**

_____
_____
_____

25. How strongly would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the SQA?  (Strongly Agree [SA], Agree [A], Neither Agree Nor Disagree [N/N], Disagree [D], Strongly Disagree [SD], Don't Know [DK])

| | SA | A | N/N | D | SD | DK | Route |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The SQA is a progressive organisation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| The SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Q26 |
| The SQA can be trusted | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |