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AGGREGATE REPORT: FINAL DRAFT
SCOTTISH STAKEHOLDER TRACKING RESEARCH
2001 – 2019 (January 2020)

PREPARED FOR: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Scottish Stakeholder Tracking Research 2001 - 2019

Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Qualifications Profile

- Highest levels of **unprompted awareness** of qualifications in 2019 related to (in order) *HNCs, HNDs, National 5s, SVQs* and *Highers.*

- Highest levels of **prompted awareness** of National Qualifications in 2019 were (in order) *Highers, HNCs/HNDs, SVQs, Advanced Highers, National 5s, National 4s* and *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3.*

- In 2019, those who believed that they *knew enough about* qualifications of which they were aware were most likely to state this (in order) in relation to *Highers, National 5s, SVQs, HNCs/HNDs, PDAs, Advanced Highers and National 4s.*

Credibility of Scottish Qualifications

- The qualifications of which respondents were aware in 2019 which were perceived as having the highest credibility were (in order) *Highers, National 5s, HNCs/HNDs, SVQs, Advanced Highers* and *PDAs.*

- 1 in 6 respondents in 2019 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.

- In 2019, amongst those who stated that their views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had changed over the previous year, 7 out of 10 went on to state 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 in recent years.

- In 2019, Amongst those stating that their views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had become <u>more positive</u>, this was primarily a

function of *a belief that education is, in general, improving* and *respondents having a better understanding of qualifications*, with secondary reference in this regard being made to a belief that *qualifications are good* and that *standards are improving*.

Developing the Young Workforce

- Just under 3 out of 5 of those interviewed in 2019 stated that they had heard of DYW. This figure is similar to those found in both 2017 and 2018.

- In 2019, approaching three quarters of respondents aware of DYW stated that they had a *well-developed* knowledge and understanding of it. This outcome is in line with those found in both 2017 and 2018.

- Following a statement read out to those participating in the survey in 2019, two thirds of respondents believed DYW would be relevant to *themselves* (for Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates and Parents) or *their organisation* (for Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers). This represents an improvement on the figures found in both 2017 and 2018 (at which times around 3 out of 5 respondents noted the perceived relevance of DYW to themselves/their organisation).

- In 2019, when Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers were asked *where they would go* if they wanted to find out more about DYW, the most common responses were those of *SQA, a local college or colleges, a local school or schools* and *colleagues*.

SQA Profile

- In 2019, approaching 9 out of 10 respondents stated that they had heard of SQA. Although this figure is broadly in line with those found between 2012 and 2017, it is slightly lower than that found in 2018.

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- Three quarters of those aware of SQA in 2019 believed that they *knew enough about* the Authority. This figure is broadly in line with those found in almost all of the survey phases since 2012 but is slightly lower than the outcome found in 2018.

- In 2019, over 4 out of 5 respondents aware of SQA believed the Authority to have *high credibility*. This continues a rise which has been apparent in this regard since 2017, at which time less than three quarters of respondents aware of SQA believed the Authority to have *high credibility*.

- When those stating their belief in 2019 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/well-established organisation*, *SQA doing a good job* and *SQA having effective exam marking procedures*, with secondary mention being made in this regard of other factors such as *SQA being Scotland's principal Awarding Body, respondents not having heard anything negative about SQA, SQA being efficient/competent, respondents not having encountered problems with SQA previously* and *a belief that SQA has high standards.*

- In 2019, when respondents who believed SQA to have low credibility were asked – again, on an unprompted basis – why they believed this to be the case, their principal response (noted on a largely indicative basis) was that this was a function of *too many changes relating to SQA*.

- Well over 9 out of 10 Employers and Training Providers in 2019 stated that they were aware that SQA offers *Examination Services*, with secondary awareness being noted by these audiences of SQA offering *Customised Awards, Credit Rating Services* and *Assessment Delivery Services*.

- In 2019, approaching a third of Employers and Training Providers stated that they would consider using *SQA Examination Services*, with this applying to 1 in 5 respondents in relation to *Customised Awards.*

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Thereafter, there was more limited consideration of using a range of other services under consideration.

- Just over 2 out of 5 of those interviewed in 2019 stated that they had contacted SQA. This figure is very similar to that found in 2018 but higher than that found in 2017.

- In 2019, those who had contacted SQA provided a very largely positive profile of these contacts, with an average score of 8.58 out of a possible 10 being provided, with this score being amongst the highest found since this question was first asked in 2013.

- Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers who had contacted SQA and provided a rating of 6 or more out of 10, principally stated – on an unprompted basis – that this high rating was due to *SQA being very helpful* and *questions being answered quickly by SQA.*

- Just under half of those interviewed in 2019 stated that they had had contact from SQA, with these levels of contacts from SQA being in line with those found in both 2017 and 2018.

- The average rating of contacts from SQA found in 2019 was 8.98 out of a possible 10, with this figure being the highest found since this question was first asked in 2013.

- Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers who had had contact from SQA and provided a rating of 6 or more out of 10 for these contacts stated – on an unprompted basis – that this high rating was primarily a function of *SQA providing relevant information*, with secondary mention being made in this regard of other factors such as SQA being *helpful, very knowledgeable/informative* and *supportive.*

- Approaching 9 out of 10 respondents in 2019 agreed that *SQA can be trusted*, with this applying to three quarters of respondents in terms of *SQA*

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enabling organisations to carry out their roles more effectively and over 7 out of 10 respondents in relation to SQA *being a progressive organisation*. Thereafter, well over 2 out of 5 respondents specifically <u>strongly agreed</u> that SQA *can be trusted*, with this applying to 1 in 5 respondents in relation to SQA *being a progressive organisation* and *enabling organisations to carry out their roles more effectively*.

- Between 2016 and 2019, there has been an increase in the extent to which respondents believed that SQA *can be trusted,* whilst this also applied to the extent to which respondents noted increasing beliefs between 2017 and 2019 that SQA is an *enabling* and *progressive* organisation.

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1.0   INTRODUCTION

This report details findings to emerge from the latest phase 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 this phase of the research was undertaken in 2019.

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 (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)

Interviews with the *Professional Audiences* (i.e. Schools, Colleges, Training Providers and Employers) were undertaken in May/June and November/December 2019.   In particular, on both occasions,

structured telephone interviews were undertaken on the following basis:

- Secondary Schools = 200 interviews (400 in total)
- Colleges = 160 interviews (320 in total)
- Training Providers = 100 interviews (200 in total)
- Employers = 200 interviews (400 in total)

Interviews with the *Public Audiences* (i.e. Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates and Parents) were undertaken during May/June 2019, with structured face-to-face interviews being undertaken with Parents and structured telephone interviews with the three remaining Public Audiences, on the following basis:

- Young Potential Candidates = 200 interviews
- Intermediate Potential Candidates = 200 interviews
- Mature Potential Candidates = 200 interviews
- Parents = 200 interviews

Accordingly, as has been the case over a number of years, a total of 2,120 interviews were undertaken for the three tranches of the Scottish Stakeholder Tracking Research undertaken in 2019.

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 2019 (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

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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 2019 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.

Finally, *Appendix II* provides a historical profile of information pertaining to reasons for changing respondent views regarding the credibility of Scottish Secondary Education qualifications through time.

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2.0   QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE

2.1   Unprompted Awareness of Qualifications

As a first stage in the Stakeholder Tracking process, respondents were asked – on an unprompted basis – if they could name any current academic or vocational qualifications.

Figures 1 and 2 profile levels of unprompted awareness of current academic or vocational qualifications between 2017 and 2019 and, in particular, Figure 1 provides a profile for the Top 5 qualifications through time in terms of **unprompted awareness**.

As in previous reports, it should be stressed that findings presented in Figures 1 and 2 below should be viewed within the context that, whilst respondents are probed on a minimum of two occasions during these questions as to whether they are aware of *"any more"* qualifications, the vast majority of respondents tend to provide a maximum of only one or perhaps two responses.

Accordingly, the outputs presented in Figures 1 and 2 do not necessarily mean that a respondent is unaware of a particular qualification.   Rather, they indicate a qualification that they **first mention** and, thereafter, the qualification that they made **second mention** and, finally, for a small proportion of respondents, the qualification that they **third mention**.

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"Can you tell me the names of any current academic or vocational qualifications that you are aware of?"

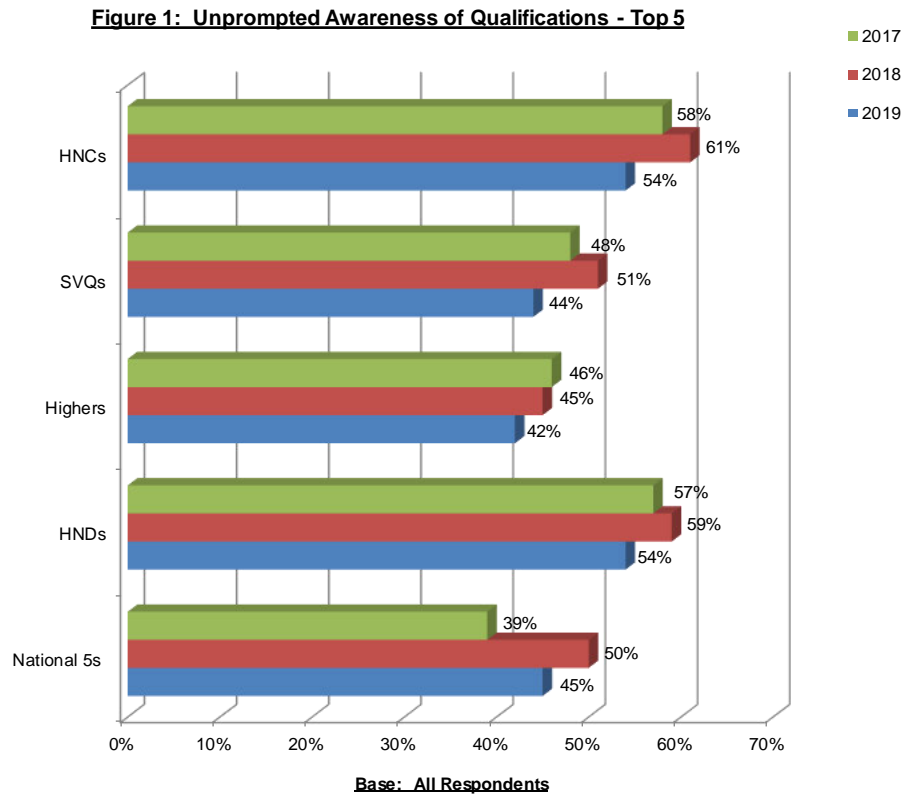**Figure 1: Unprompted Awareness of Qualifications - Top 5**

Figure 1 indicates that highest levels of **unprompted awareness** of qualifications in 2019 related to:

- HNCs (54%)
- HNDs (54%)
- National 5s (45%)
- SVQs (44%)
- Highers (42%)

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 1 indicated that unprompted awareness of each of these qualifications was highest amongst the respondent types noted below:

- HNCs: Training Providers (66%), Colleges (63%), Employers (60%) and Schools (51%)
- HNDs: Colleges (71%), Training Providers (68%) and Employers (62%)
- National 5s: Colleges (70%), Schools (70%), Employers (57%) and Training Providers (53%)
- SVQs: Colleges (79%) and Schools (61%)
- Highers: Young Potential Candidates (55%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (51%)

It is of interest to note from Figure 1 that levels of unprompted awareness of *Highers* were broadly similar between 2017 and 2019. However, between 2018 and 2019, there was a slight decrease in unprompted awareness of:

- HNCs (falling from 61% to 54%)
- HNDs (falling from 59% to 54%)
- National 5s (falling from 50% to 45%)
- SVQs (falling from 51% to 44%)

Table 1 below provides a summary of key changes in unprompted awareness of the Top 5 qualifications by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

Table 1: Changes In Unprompted Awareness of Top 5 Qualifications – 2018/2019

Qualification Type	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
National 5s	Mature Potential Candidates & Training Providers	None	None	Young Potential Candidates, Colleges, Schools & Employers
Highers	Employers	Colleges	Mature Potential Candidates	Intermediate Potential Candidates, Parents & Schools
SVQs	None	Young Potential Candidates, Schools, Employers & Training Providers	Mature Potential Candidates & Colleges	Intermediate Potential Candidates
HNCs	Mature Potential Candidates	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates	Colleges, Employers & Training Providers
HNDs	None	Parents	Intermediate Potential Candidates	Schools, Employers & Training Providers

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"Can you tell me the names of any current academic or vocational qualifications that you are aware of?"

Figure 2: Unprompted Awareness of Qualifications - Top 6-10
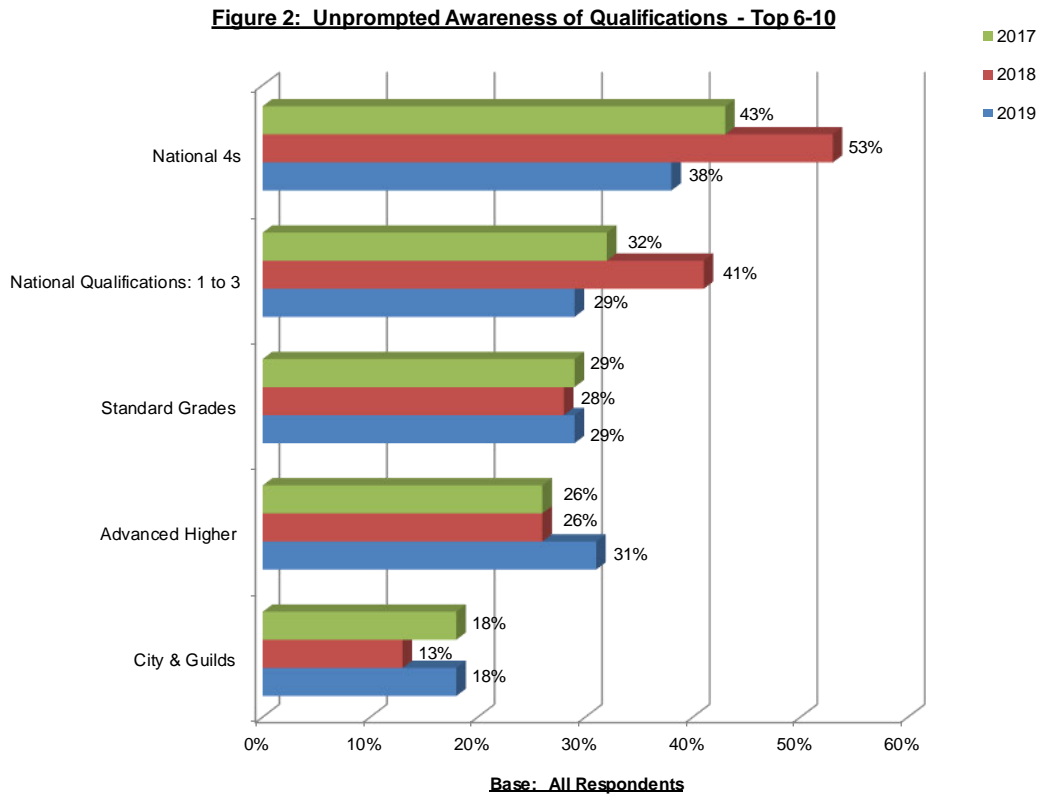

Figure 2 provides a profile of the remaining *Top 10* qualifications between 2017 and 2019 (i.e. ranked 6 to 10) in terms of their **unprompted awareness** and indicates that these qualifications in 2019 were:

- National 4s (38%)
- Advanced Highers (31%)
- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (29%)
- Standard Grades (29%)
- City & Guilds (18%)

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 2 indicated that unprompted levels of awareness of each of the qualifications under consideration here were cited by the respondent types noted below:

- <u>National 4s</u>: Schools (70%), Colleges (57%), Employers (54%) and Training Providers (46%)

- <u>Advanced Highers</u>: Young Potential Candidates (39%), Schools (37%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (36%)

- <u>National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3</u>: Schools (60%), Colleges (55%), Employers (44%) and Training Providers (38%)

- <u>Standard Grades</u>: Mature Potential Candidates (57%), Parents (57%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (54%) and Young Potential Candidates (46%)

- <u>City & Guilds</u>: Young Potential Candidates (22%), Employers (21%), Mature Potential Candidates (20%), Parents (19%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (18%)

It is of interest to note that, between 2017 and 2019, there was little change in terms of unprompted awareness of *Standard Grades* and that, between 2018 and 2019, there was a slight increase in unprompted awareness of:

- Advanced Highers (rising from 26% to 31%)
- City & Guilds (rising from 13% to 18%)

It is of some concern to note from Figure 2 that, between 2018 and 2019, there was a notable decrease in unprompted awareness of *National 4s* (falling from 53% to 38%), although it should be noted that this outcome is only slightly lower than that found in 2017 (43%).

It is also of some concern to note that, between 2018 and 2019, there was a fall in unprompted awareness of *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3* (falling from 41% to 29%), albeit that this outcome is broadly in line with that found in 2017 (32%).

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Table 2 below provides a summary of key changes in levels of unprompted awareness of **all** National Qualifications under consideration by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

Table 2: Changes in Unprompted Awareness of all National Qualifications – 2018/2019

Qualification Type	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3	None	None	Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Parents & Employers	Colleges & Schools
National 4s	None	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates	Young Potential Candidates, Parents, Colleges, Schools, Employers & Training Providers
National 5s	Mature Potential Candidates & Training Providers	None	None	Young Potential Candidates, Colleges, Schools & Employers
Standard Grades	Parents	None	Mature Potential Candidates	None
Highers	Employers	Colleges	Mature Potential Candidates	Intermediate Potential Candidates, Parents & Schools
Advanced Highers	None	Colleges, Employers & Training Providers	Intermediate Potential Candidates	Parents
SVQs	None	Young Potential Candidates, Schools, Employers & Training Providers	Mature Potential Candidates & Colleges	Intermediate Potential Candidates

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2.2 National Qualifications Profile

"Have you heard of the following qualifications?"

Figure 3: National Qualifications Awareness (Prompted)
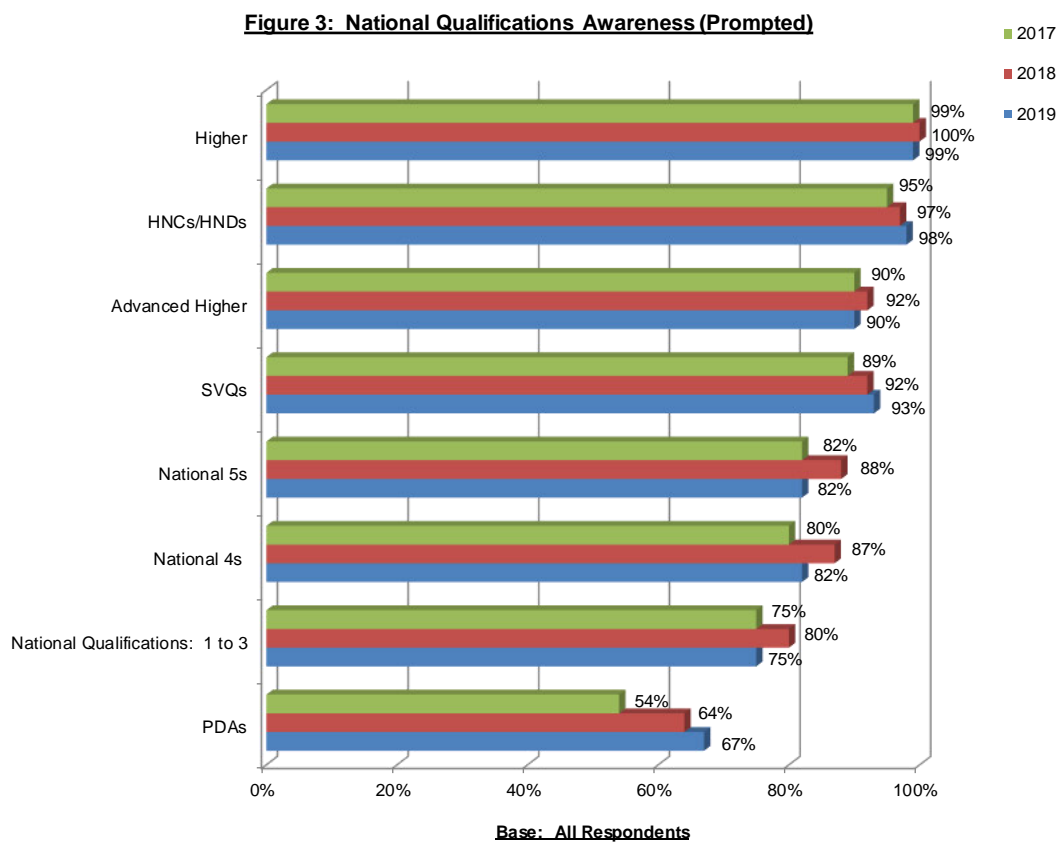

Base: All Respondents

Figure 3 indicates that levels of **prompted awareness** of the National Qualifications under consideration in 2019 were highest in relation to:

- Highers (99%)
- HNCs/HNDs (98%)
- SVQs (93%)
- Advanced Highers (90%)
- National 5s (82%)
- National 4s (82%)
- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (75%)

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 3 indicated that levels of prompted awareness of each of the National Qualifications under consideration in 2019 were highest amongst the respondent types noted below (where notable variances were apparent):

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- SVQs: Colleges (100%), Schools (100%), Training Providers (99%) and Employers (97%)

- Advanced Highers: Colleges (99%), Schools (99%), Training Providers (99%), Employers (98%) and Young Potential Candidates (96%)

- National 5s: Schools (100%), Colleges (99%), Training Providers (98%) and Young Potential Candidates (93%)

- National 4s: Colleges (99%), Schools (99%), Training Providers (97%) and Young Potential Candidates (95%)

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3: Colleges (96%), Schools (92%), Training Providers (90%) and Young Potential Candidates (88%)

It can also be seen from Figure 3 that levels of prompted awareness of *Highers, HNCs/HNDs, Advanced Highers* and *SVQs* were very similar between 2017 and 2019. However, between 2018 and 2019, there was a slight decrease in levels of prompted awareness of:

- National 5s (falling from 88% to 82%)
- National 4s (falling from 87% to 82%)
- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 (falling from 80% to 75%)

In all three cases, however, the outcomes found in 2019 are identical or very similar to those found in 2017.

Finally, Figure 3 indicates that, between 2017 and 2019, there was an increase in levels of prompted awareness of *PDAs* (rising from 54% to 67%).

Table 3 provides a summary of key changes in levels of prompted awareness of National Qualifications by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

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Table 3: Changes in Prompted National Qualifications Awareness – 2018/2019

Qualification Type	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3	None	Young Potential Candidates	Mature Potential Candidates, Schools & Employers	Parents
National 4s	None	None	Mature Potential Candidates	Parents
National 5s	None	None	None	Parents
Highers	None	None	None	None
Advanced Highers	None	None	Mature Potential Candidates	None
SVQs	None	Young Potential Candidates	None	None
HNCs/HNDs	None	None	None	None
Professional Development Awards	None	Young Potential Candidates & Training Providers	None	None

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

Figure 4: Enough Known About National Qualifications
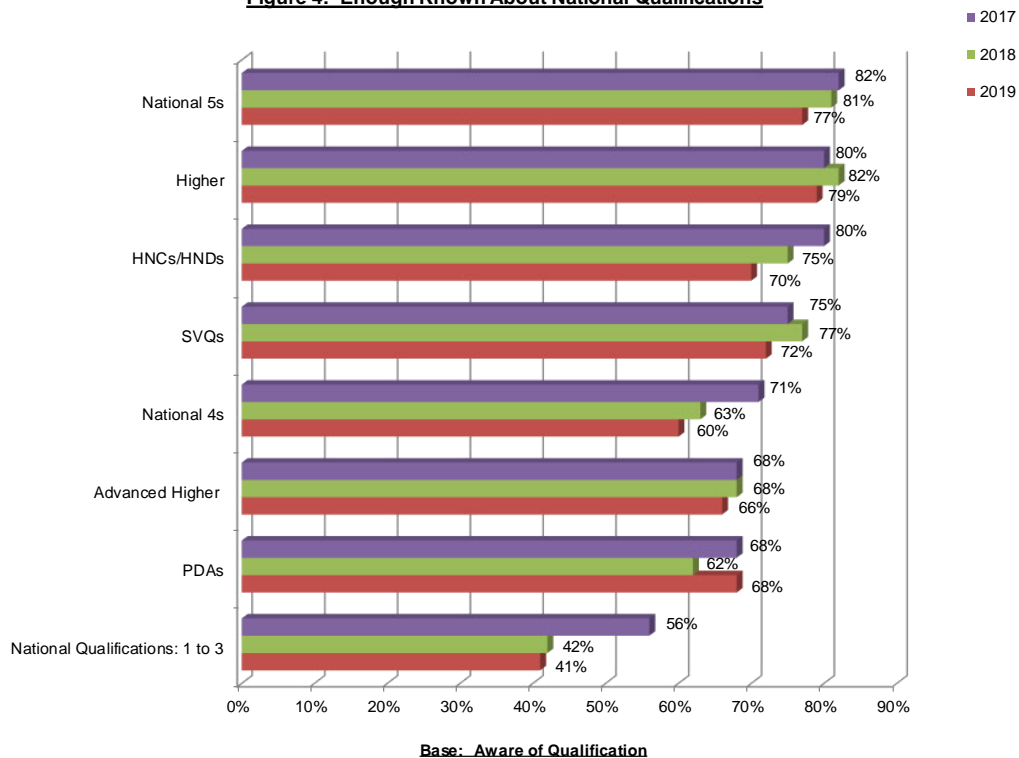
Base: Aware of Qualification

Figure 4 indicates that, in 2019, 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 (77%)
- SVQs (72%)
- HNCs/HNDs (70%)
- PDAs (68%)
- Advanced Highers (66%)
- National 4s (60%)

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 4 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):

- Highers: Schools (94%), Colleges (93%), Training Providers (93%) and Employers (87%)
- National 5s: Colleges (92%), Schools (89%), Training Providers (86%), Employers (84%) and Young Potential Candidates (78%)
- SVQs: Colleges (89%), Training Providers (89%), Employers (85%), Schools (72%) and Young Potential Candidates (70%)
- HNCs/HNDs: Colleges (91%), Training Providers (90%) and Employers (88%)
- PDAs: Colleges (83%), Training Providers (77%), Young Potential Candidates (72%), Employers (70%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (69%)
- Advanced Highers: Schools (85%)
- National 4s: Schools (86%) and Young Potential Candidates (77%)

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From Figure 4, it can be seen that, between 2017 and 2019, the extent to which respondents believed that they *knew enough about National 5s, Highers* and *Advanced Highers* were broadly similar. This also applies to *National 4s* and *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3* between 2018 and 2019. However, between 2018 and 2019, it is apparent that there has been a slight fall in the extent to which respondents believe that they *knew enough about*:

- HNCs/HNDs (falling from 75% to 70%)
- SVQs (falling from 77% to 72%)

Finally, Figure 4 indicates that, between 2018 and 2019, there was an increasing extent to which those aware of *PDAs* believed that they *knew enough about them* (rising from 62% to 68%).

Table 4 provides a summary of key changes in levels of belief that *enough was known* about each of the qualifications under consideration between 2018 and 2019.

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Table 4: Changes in Perceptions That Enough is Known About Qualifications – 2018/2019

Qualification Type	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3	Colleges & Employers	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates & Mature Potential Candidates	Young Potential Candidates & Parents
National 4s	Colleges	Employers	None	Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates & Parents
National 5s	None	None	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates & Parents
Highers	None	None	None	Parents
Advanced Highers	Schools	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates	Parents
SVQs	None	None	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates & Parents
HNCs/HNDs	Training Providers	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates	Parents
PDAs	Training Providers	Young Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates & Schools	None	Parents

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3.0   CREDIBILITY OF SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS

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

Figure 5: Qualifications Credibility
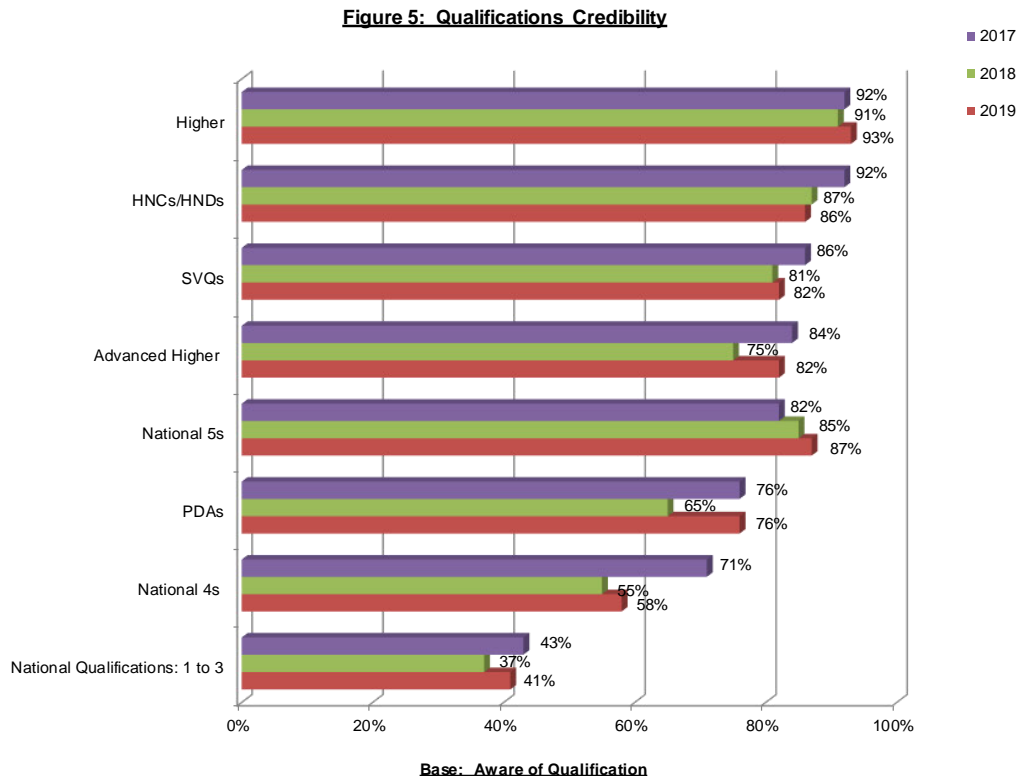

Base: Aware of Qualification

Figure 5 indicates that those qualifications of which respondents were aware in 2019 which were perceived as having the highest credibility were:

- Highers (93%)
- National 5s (87%)
- HNCs/HNDs (86%)
- SVQs (82%)
- Advanced Highers (82%)
- PDAs (76%)

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Further examination of the data presented in Figure 5 indicated that highest levels of perceived credibility for each of the qualifications under consideration (of which respondents were aware in 2019) were indicated by the audiences noted below (where notable variances were apparent):

- Highers: Colleges (97%), Schools (97%), Intermediate Potential Candidates (97%) and Parents (96%)
- National 5s: Schools (96%) and Colleges (94%)
- HNCs and HNDs: Intermediate Potential Candidates (93%), Training Providers (92%) and Colleges (90%)
- SVQs: Training Providers (97%), Colleges (96%) and Employers (95%)
- Advanced Highers: Intermediate Potential Candidates (97%), Parents (93%), Young Potential Candidates (91%) and Mature Potential Candidates (89%)
- PDAs: Mature Potential Candidates (84%), Colleges (84%), Young Potential Candidates (83%), Parents (82%), Training Providers (82%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (81%)

It should be noted that levels of perceived low credibility of qualifications were limited but, nonetheless, notable in relation to a number of qualifications amongst some audiences and, in particular:

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3: 14% overall and highest amongst Young Potential Candidates (29%)
- National 4s: 15% overall and highest amongst Schools (33%) and Colleges (21%)

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:

- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3: 45% overall and highest amongst Training Providers (76%), Colleges (70%), Employers (69%) and Schools (57%)
- National 4s: 27% overall and highest amongst Training Providers (51%), Colleges (41%), Employers (39%) and Schools (28%)

It should be noted that the overall *don't know* score for National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 was lower than that found in 2018 (55%).

There are a number of interesting trends which are apparent in the data presented in Figure 5, including:

- Little change in the perceived high credibility of *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3, National 4s, National 5s, SVQs* and *HNCs/HNDs* between 2018 and 2019
- Increased perceived high credibility of *National 5s* between 2017 and 2019 (rising from 82% to 87%), with this also applying to *PDAs* (rising from 65% to 76%) and *Advanced Highers* (from 75% to 82%) between 2018 and 2019

Table 5 below provides a summary of key changes in perceived *high qualifications credibility* by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

Table 5: Changes In Perceived Qualification High Credibility – 2018/2019

Qualification Type	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3	None	None	None	None
National 4s	Young Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates & Parents	None	None	None
National 5s	None	Mature Potential Candidates & Parents	None	None
Highers	Intermediate Potential Candidates	Parents	None	None
Advanced Higher	Training Providers	Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates & Parents	None	None
SVQs	Mature Potential Candidates	Parents	Schools	None
HNCs/HNDs	None	Employers	None	None
PDAs	Schools & Training Providers	Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates & Parents	None	None

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"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?"

Figure 6: Views on Qualification Credibility Changed?
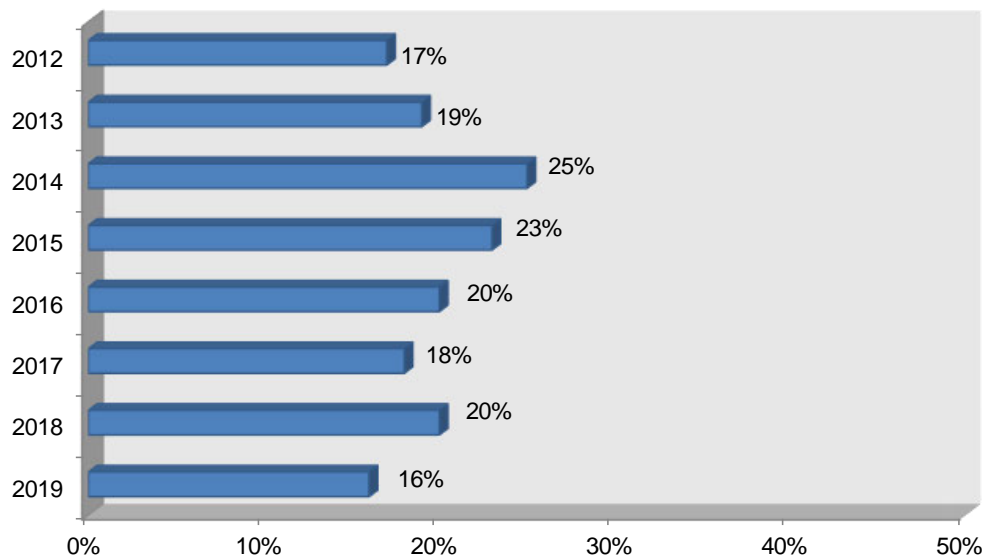
Base: All Respondents

From Figure 6, it can be seen that 1 in 6 respondents in 2019 (16%) 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.[1]

This figure is slightly lower than that found in 2018 (20%).

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 6 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:

- Employers (25%)
- Schools (24%)
- Training Providers (21%)

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[1] 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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- Colleges (19%)

Table 6 below provides a summary of key changes between 2018 and 2019 in terms of views on the credibility of qualifications having changed over that period.

Table 6: Extent to Which Views on Qualification Credibility Have Changed – 2018/2019

Change In Views Re Credibility?	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Yes	None	None	Colleges & Schools	Parents

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

Figure 7: Ways in Which Views On Qualification Credibility Have Changed?

Base: Heard of SQA
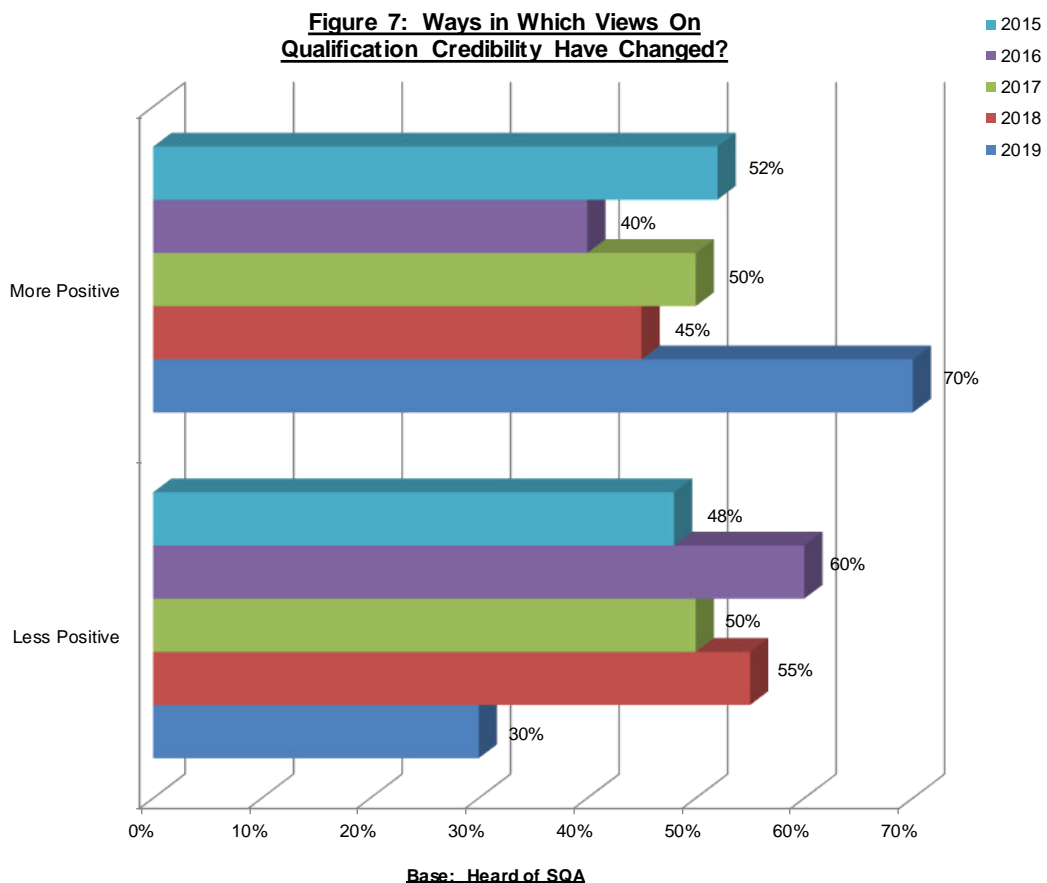
From Figure 7, it can be seen that, in 2019 – amongst those whose views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had changed over the previous year – 7 out of 10 (70%) stated that their views had become **more positive**. This outcome continues to reflect a notable degree of

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variability which has been apparent in this regard through time and is by far the highest figure found since 2012 (with the previous highest figure – 52% – found in 2015).

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

Figure 7 also indicates that 1 in 3 respondents in 2019 whose views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had changed over the previous year (30%) 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 and is the lowest figure found since 2012 (with the previous lowest figure – 48% – being found in 2015).

"In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>more positive</u>?"

**Figure 8: Ways in Which Views Have Become More Positive -
Indicative (2019)**
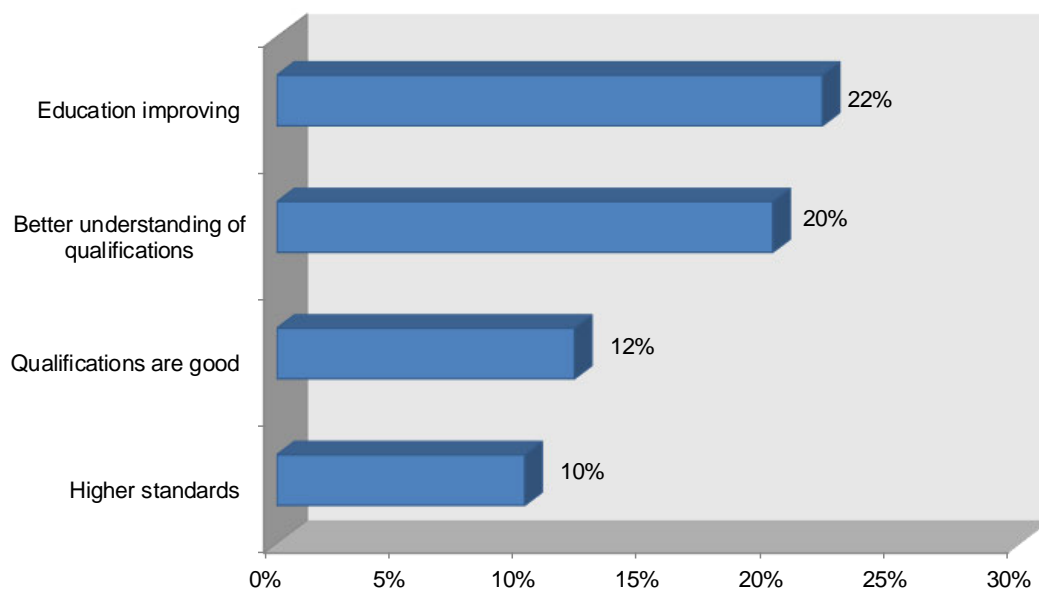
Base: Views More Positive

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Figure 8 indicates that – amongst those stating in 2019 that their views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had become <u>more positive</u> – this was primarily a function (as cited on an unprompted basis) of:

- A belief that education is, in general, improving (22%)
- Respondents having a better understanding of qualifications (20%)

Thereafter, secondary unprompted mention was made here of:

- A belief that qualifications are *good* (12%)
- Perceived higher standards in education (10%)

Tables 7a to 7c provide a historical profile in terms of factors noted in respect of views regarding the credibility of Scottish qualifications becoming more positive between 2012 and 2019.

<u>Table 7a: Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming More Positive – 2012 to 2019</u>

Factor	2012	2013
Higher standards	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Education is improving	Not mentioned/ little mention	Primary Factor
More choice of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
More aware of qualifications available	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Better understanding of qualifications	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
Introduction of CfE	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
New curriculum/ qualifications	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Media coverage more positive	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Exam system better	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

Table 7b: Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming More Positive – 2012 to 2019 (cont'd)

Factor	2014	2015	2016
Higher standards	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Education is improving	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
More choice of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
More aware of qualifications available	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Better understanding of qualifications	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
Introduction of CfE	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
New curriculum/ qualifications	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Media coverage more positive	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Exam system better	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

Table 7c: Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming More Positive – 2012 to 2019 (cont'd)

Factor	2017	2018	2019
Higher standards	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Education is improving	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
More choice of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More aware of qualifications available	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Better understanding of qualifications	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Introduction of CfE	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
New curriculum/ qualifications	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Media coverage more positive	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Exam system better	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications are good	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor

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"In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become <u>less positive</u>?"

Figure 9: Ways in Which Views Have Become Less Positive - Highly Indicative (2019)

Base: Views Less Positive
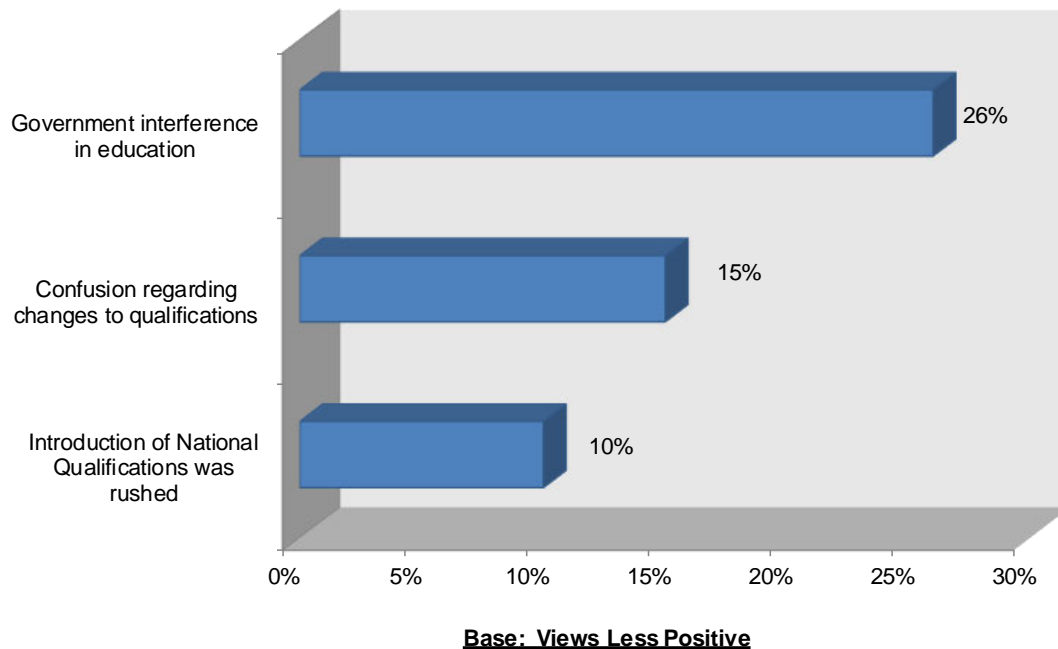
From Figure 9, it can be seen that, when respondents stating in 2019 that their views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications had become <u>less positive</u> were asked – again, on an unprompted basis – why this was the case, only three factors emerged with any prominence, namely:

- Due to Government interference in education (26%)
- Confusion regarding recent changes to qualifications (15%)
- A belief that the introduction of National Qualifications was *too rushed* (10%)

It should be stressed that the outcomes noted above in relation to both Figure 8 and Figure 9 are *largely indicative in nature* (particularly in terms of the outcomes presented in Figure 9) due to the relatively small number of respondents to whom these questions were addressed (as a function of the relatively small proportion of respondents who

previously stated that their views about qualification credibility had changed over the previous year).

Tables 8a to 8c provide a historical profile in terms of factors noted in respect of views regarding the credibility of Scottish qualifications becoming less positive between 2012 and 2019.

Table 8a: Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2012 to 2019

Factor	2012	2013
Media coverage	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lower standards	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
Qualifications less credible	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Too much change	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications less valuable	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Too many qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Financial cutbacks in education	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications don't lead to jobs	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Exams too easy to pass	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications confusing	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
Schools not ready for new qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Primary Factor
Workload for teachers	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Teachers unhappy	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
National 4 qualifications lack credibility	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

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Table 8b: Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2012 to 2019 (cont'd)

| Factor	2014	2015	2016
Media coverage	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lower standards	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Qualifications less credible	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Too much change	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
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	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Schools not ready for new qualifications	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Workload for teachers	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Teachers unhappy	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
National 4 qualifications lack credibility	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Primary Factor

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Table 8c: Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2012 to 2019 (cont'd)

Factor	2017	2018	2019
Media coverage	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lower standards	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications less credible	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Too much change	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	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	Not mentioned/ little mention	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Government interference in education	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Primary Factor
Introduction of National Qualifications was rushed	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor

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4.0 DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE

"Have you heard of Developing the Young Workforce (also known as DYW)?"

Figure 10: Heard of Developing the Young Workforce
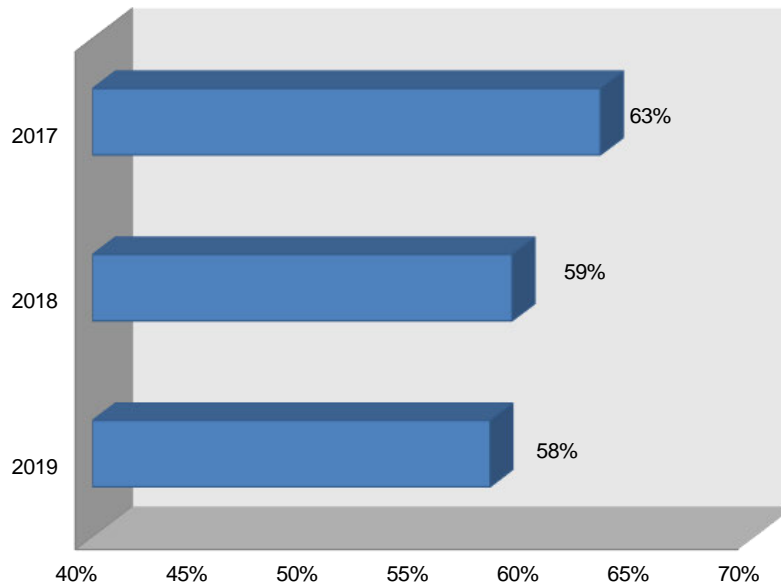
Base: All Respondents

Figure 10 indicates that approaching 3 out of 5 respondents in 2019 (58%) stated that they had heard of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW). This figure is almost identical to that found in 2018 (59%) and is similar to the outcome found in 2017 (63%).

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 10 indicated that highest levels of awareness of DYW were apparent amongst Colleges, Schools, Training Providers and, thereafter, Young Potential Candidates and Employers, i.e.:

- Colleges (89%)
- Schools (87%)
- Training Providers (71%)
- Young Potential Candidates (62%)
- Employers (60%)

Table 9 provides a summary of key changes in awareness of DYW by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

Table 9: Aware of DYW – 2018/2019

Aware of DYW	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Yes	None	Young Potential Candidates	Colleges & Schools	Mature Potential Candidates

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

Figure 11: Knowledge & Understanding of DYW
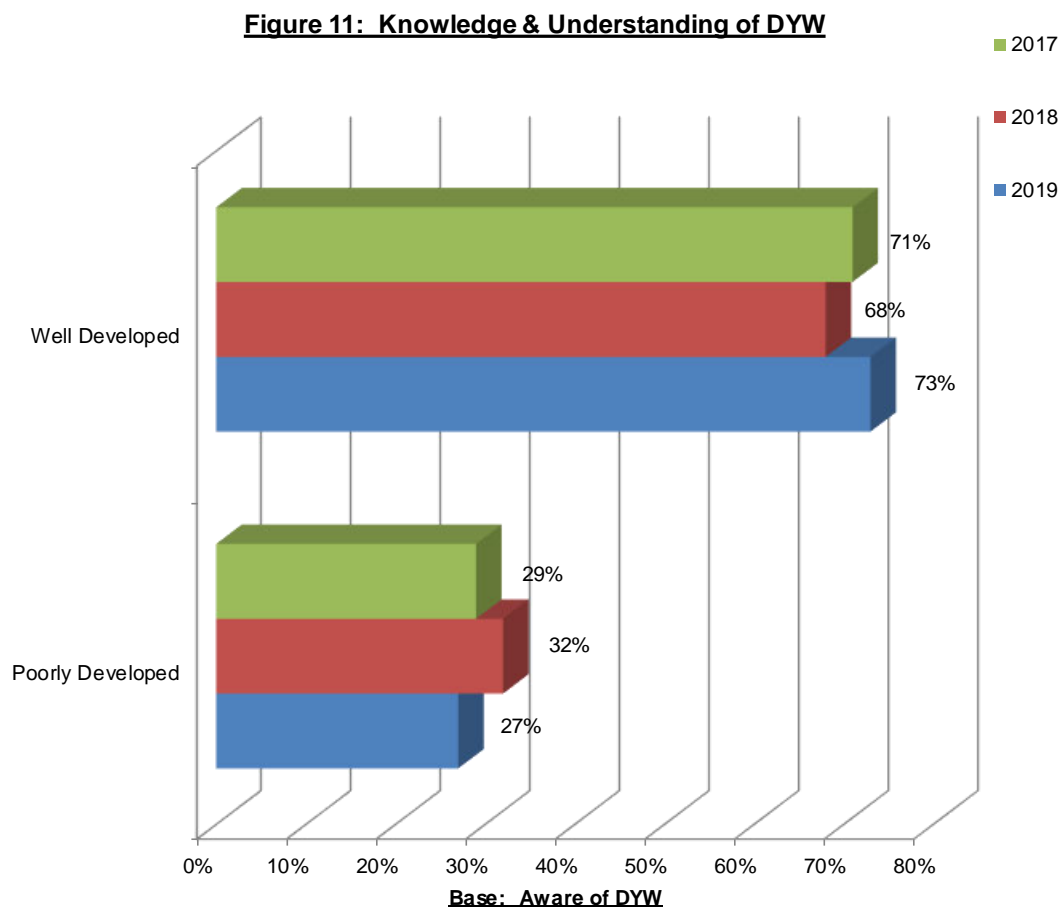
From Figure 11, it can be seen that approaching three quarters of respondents aware of DYW in 2019 (73%) stated that they had a *well-developed* knowledge and understanding of it. This represents a slight increase from the outcome found in 2018 (68%) and is in line with the outcome found in 2017 (71%).

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Further examination of the data presented in Figure 11 indicated, with one exception, that the extent to which those aware of DYW believed that they had a well-developed knowledge and understanding of it varied little between the eight audiences. The exception were Parents who were least likely to believe that they had a well-developed knowledge and understanding of DYW (60% compared to between 70% and 78% for those in the remaining audiences).

From Figure 11, it can also be seen that over a quarter of those interviewed in 2019 (27%) stated that they had a *poorly developed* knowledge and understanding of DYW. This represents a slight fall in comparison to 2018 (from 32%) but is in line with the outcome found in 2017 (29%). It should also be noted that this outcome was most notable amongst Parents (40%).

Table 10 below provides a summary of key changes in the level of knowledge and understanding of DYW by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

Table 10: Knowledge & Understanding of DYW – 2018/2019

	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Well developed	Intermediate Potential Candidates & Parents	Mature Potential Candidates & Schools	None	None

All respondents were read out the following statement – *"Developing the Young Workforce is a Scottish Government initiative to reduce youth unemployment by creating a world-class vocational education system"*.

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"How relevant would you say DYW is to you/your organisation?"[2]

Figure 12: Perceived Relevance of DYW for You/Your Organisation

Base: All Respondents
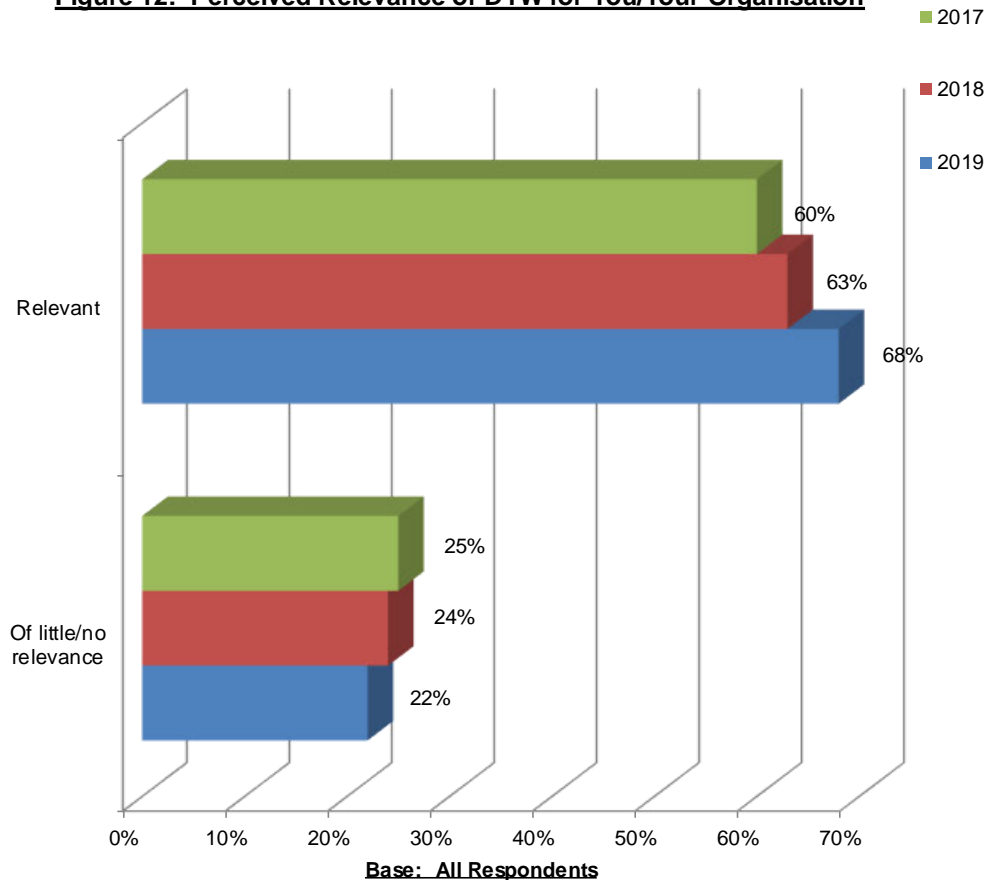
When <u>all</u> respondents were asked – following a statement read out to them – how relevant they believed DYW would be to themselves (for Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates and Parents) or their organisation (for Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers), Figure 12 indicates that two thirds of those interviewed (68%) believed that it <u>was</u> relevant. This figure continues an upward trend which has been apparent in this regard since 2017, at which time 3 out of 5 respondents believed that DYW was relevant to them/their organisation (60%).

Further examination of the data here indicated that levels of perceived relevance of DYW amongst the Professional Audiences were high

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[2] This question referred to *your organisation* when Colleges, Schools, Employers and Training Providers were interviewed and *you* when Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates and Parents were interviewed.

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(ranging from 68% for Training Providers to 82% for Colleges). In terms of the Public Audiences, Young Potential Candidates, Parents and Intermediate Potential Candidates were most likely to believe that DYW was relevant to themselves (77%, 65% and 59% respectively).

Table 11 below provides a summary of key changes in perceived relevance of DYW by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

Table 11: Relevance of DYW – 2018/2019

	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Relevant	Schools & Training Providers	Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates & Employers	Mature Potential Candidates	None

"If you wanted to find out more about DYW, where would you go to source this information?"

Figure 13: Potential Sources of Information to Find Out More About DYW

Base: Colleges, Schools, Employers & Training Providers
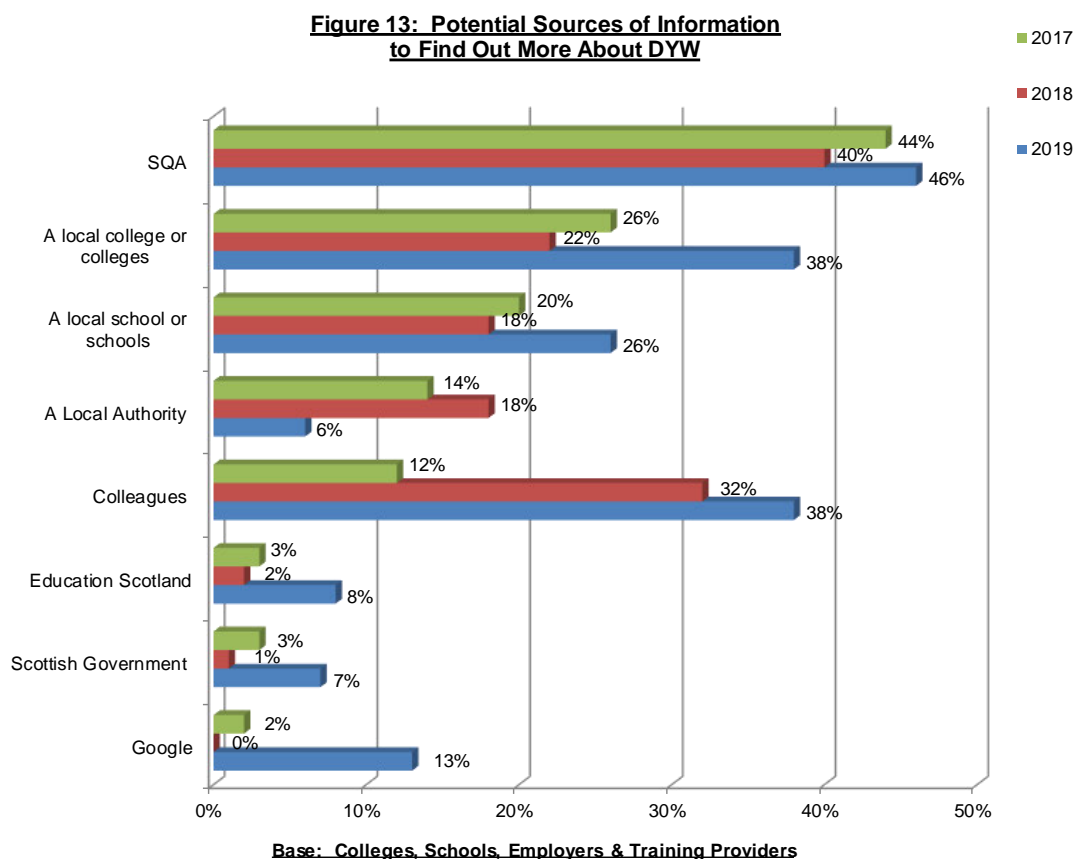
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Figure 13 indicates that, when respondents from **Colleges, Schools, Employers** and **Training Providers** were asked – on an unprompted basis – where they would go if they wanted to find out more about DYW, the most common response was that of *SQA* (46%).

Thereafter, secondary mention was made in this regard of:

- Colleagues (38%)
- A local college or colleges (38%)
- A local school or schools (26%)

Further examination of the data here indicated that Training Providers were most likely to cite the following sources:

- SQA (57%)
- A local college or colleges (48%)
- A local school or schools (35%)

It should be noted that the outcomes here for 2018 and 2019 were broadly similar in relation to the use of *SQA*, *a local school or schools, colleagues, Education Scotland* and *the Scottish Government*. However, during that time, there was increasing reference to the potential use of *a local college or colleges* (rising from 22% to 38%) and *Google* (rising from 0% to 13%), but a decline in references to potential use of *a Local Authority* (falling from 18% to 6%). In both cases, however, these outcomes are similar to those found in 2017.

Table 12 below provides a summary of key changes in potential sources of information about DYW between 2018 and 2019.

Table 12: Potential Sources of Information re DYW– 2018/2019

	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
SQA	Colleges	Employers	None	None
Scottish Government	None	None	None	None
Education Scotland	None	None	None	None
A Local Authority	None	Colleges, Schools, Employers & Training Providers	None	None
A local school or schools	Schools	Colleges	None	None
A local college or colleges	Employers	Colleges & Schools	None	None
Colleagues	None	None	None	Schools

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5.0   SQA PROFILE

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

Figure 14: SQA Awareness

Base: All Respondents
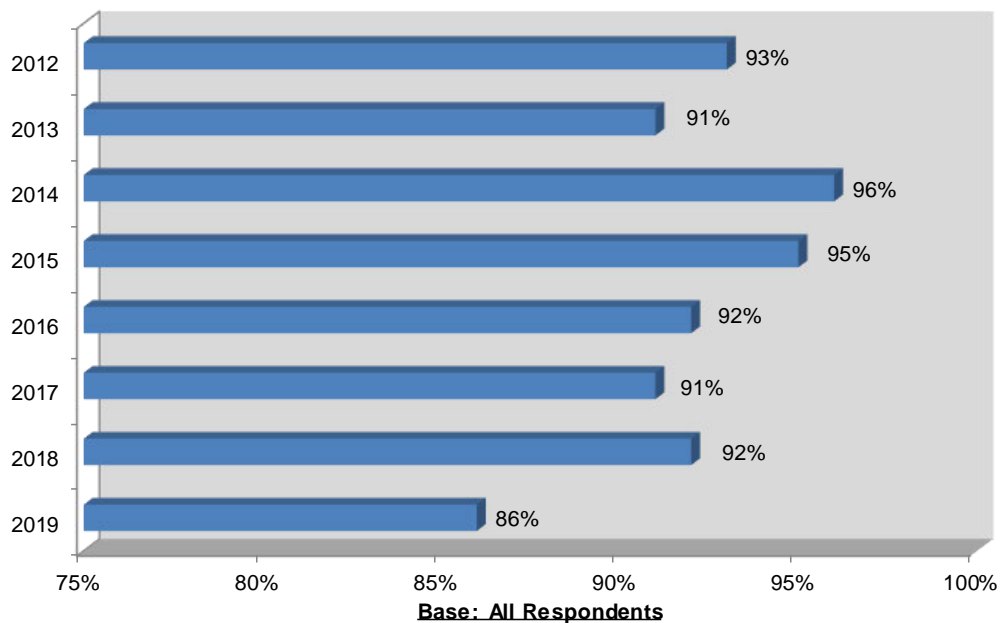
From Figure 14, it can be seen that approaching 9 out of 10 respondents in 2019 (86%) stated that they had heard of the Scottish Qualifications Authority.   This outcome is *slightly lower* than those found in *most* other survey phases between 2012 and 2018.

Further examination of the data indicated that awareness of SQA was high across all audiences (with the exception of Mature Potential Candidates), i.e.:

- Colleges (100%)
- Schools (100%)
- Employers (100%)
- Training Providers (100%)
- Young Potential Candidates (93%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (76%)
- Parents (69%)

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- Mature Potential Candidates (47%)

Table 13 below provides a summary of key changes in terms of awareness of SQA between 2018 and 2019.

Table 13: Changes In SQA Awareness – 2018/2019

	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Aware of SQA	None	None	None	Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates & Parents

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

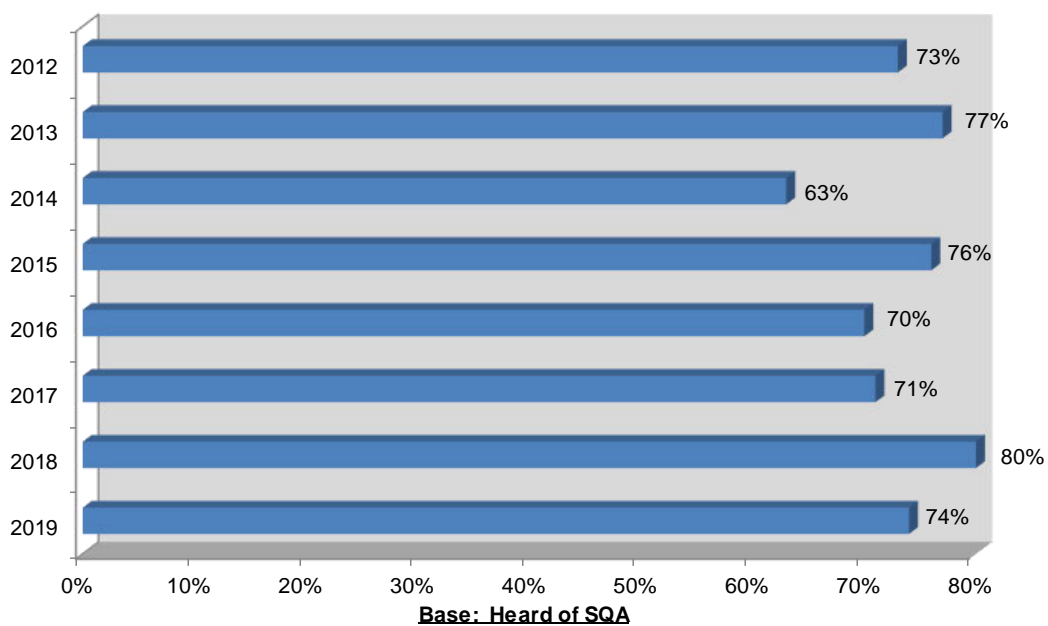**Figure 15: Enough Known About the SQA?**

Base: Heard of SQA

Figure 15 indicates that three quarters of respondents in 2019 – who were aware of SQA (74%) – believed that they *knew enough about* the Authority. This outcome is lower than that found in 2018 (80%) but is broadly in line with the outcomes found in most other survey phases since 2012.

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Further examination of the data presented in Figure 15 indicated that, in 2019, perceptions that *enough was known about SQA* were highest amongst Training Providers and Employers, and lowest amongst all four Public Audiences, i.e.:

- Training Providers (91%)
- Employers (88%)
- Schools (83%)
- Colleges (77%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (64%)
- Mature Potential Candidates (64%)
- Young Potential Candidates (59%)
- Parents (54%)

Table 14 below provides a summary of key changes in perceptions that *enough is known about SQA* by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

**Table 14: Changes In Perceptions That Enough Is Known About SQA –
2018/2019**

Enough Known About SQA?	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Yes	Employers	None	Mature Potential Candidates & Parents	Young Potential Candidates, Colleges & Schools

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

Figure 16: SQA Credibility

Base: Heard of SQA
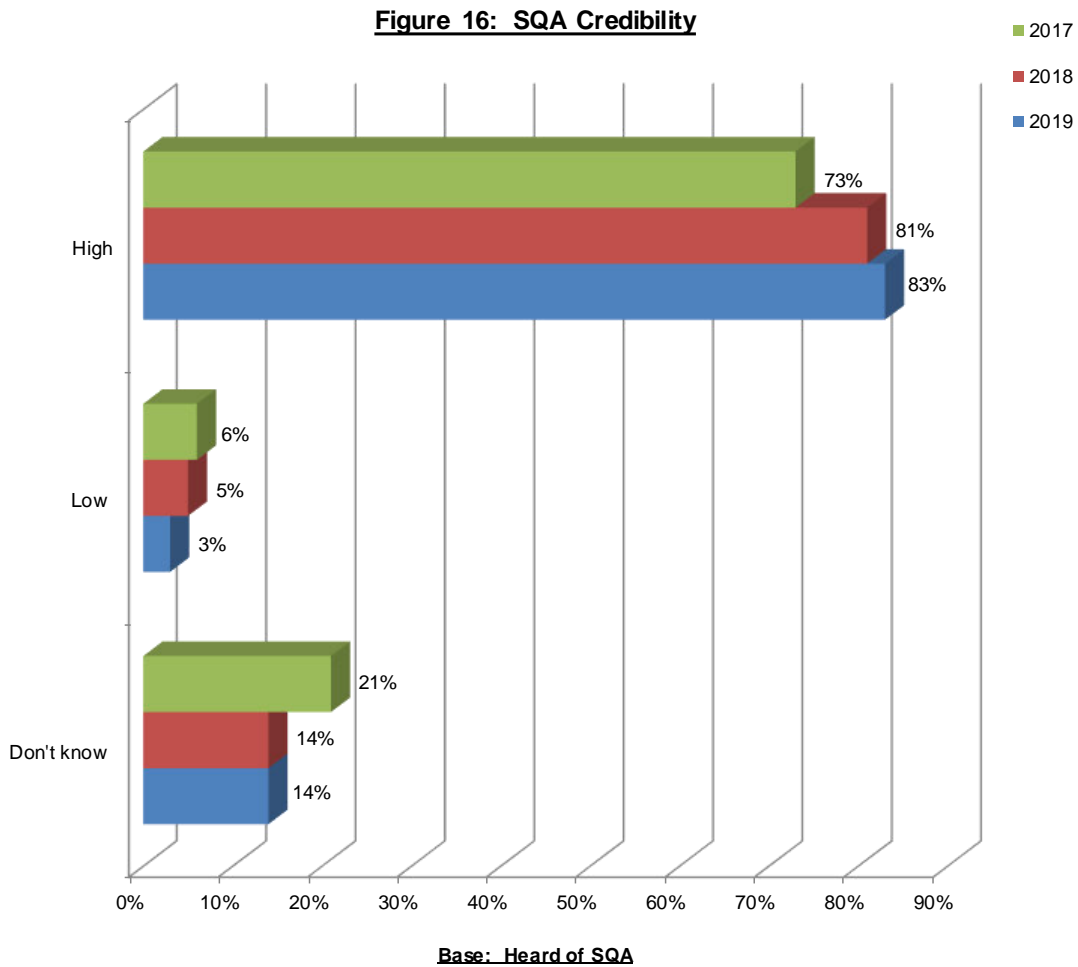
From Figure 16, it can be seen that over 4 out of 5 respondents aware of SQA in 2019 (83%) believed the Authority to have high credibility. This outcome continues a rise which has been apparent in this regard since 2017, at which time less than three quarters of those aware of SQA believed the Authority to have high credibility (73%).

Further examination of the data presented in Figure 16 indicated that perceptions of high SQA credibility in 2019 were highest amongst the Professional Audiences and lowest amongst Parents and Mature Potential Candidates, i.e.:

- Training Providers (98%)
- Colleges (88%)
- Employers (86%)

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- Schools (85%)

- Young Potential Candidates (80%)

- Intermediate Potential Candidates (78%)

- Parents (67%)

- Mature Potential Candidates (65%)

It can also be seen from Figure 16 that very few respondents aware of SQA in 2019 (only 3%) believed the Authority to have low credibility. Indeed, it should be stressed that this figure continues to represent a downward trend which has been apparent in this regard since 2016 (at which time 1 in 10 respondents – 10% – believed SQA to have low credibility).

It should also be noted that perceptions of low credibility of SQA, whilst low across all audiences, were most notable – albeit minimal – amongst Schools (7%).

Finally, it can be seen from Figure 16 that 1 in 7 respondents in 2019 (14%) provided a *can't say* response in relation to perceived credibility of SQA, with this outcome being highest amongst the Public Audiences:

- Mature Potential Candidates (35%)

- Parents (33%)

- Intermediate Potential Candidates (20%)

- Young Potential Candidates (17%)

Table 15 below provides a summary of key changes in perceived high SQA credibility between 2018 and 2019.

Table 15: Changes In SQA Credibility – 2018/2019

SQA Credibility	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
High	None	Mature Potential Candidates	Colleges	None

"Why did you provide this rating?"

Figure 17: Reason for Providing High Rating of SQA Credibility (Unprompted) - 2019
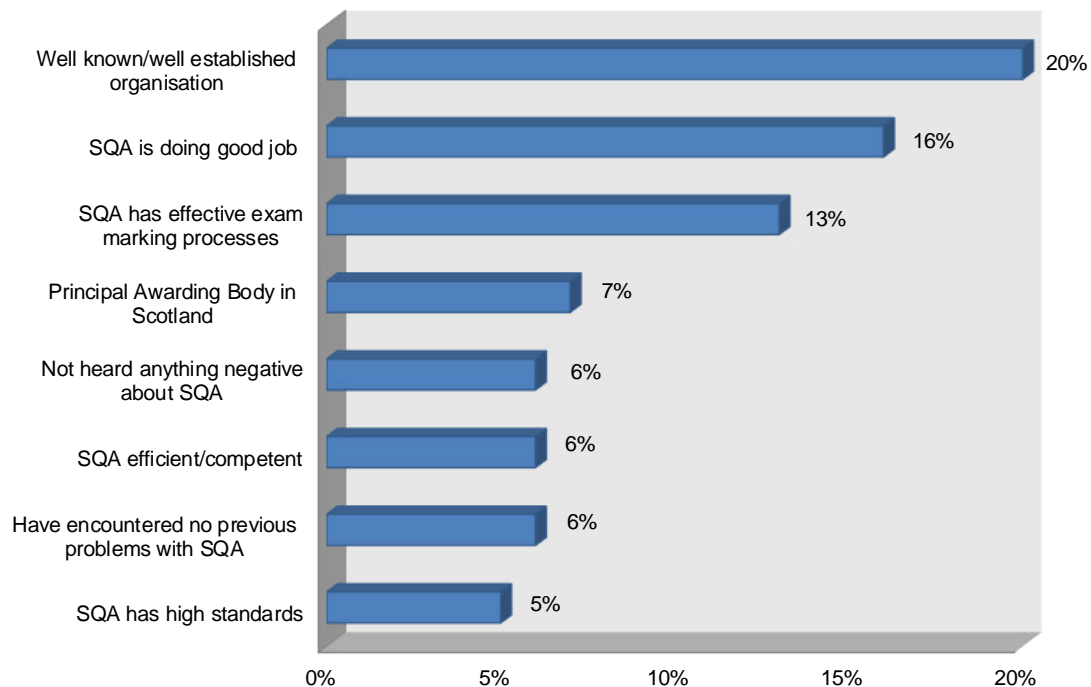
Base: Very High/Fairly High in Figure 16

Figure 17 indicates 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 were that:

- SQA is a well-known/well-established organisation (20%)
- A belief that SQA is *doing a good job* (16%)
- A belief that SQA has effective exam marking processes (13%)

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Thereafter, secondary reference was made here to factors such as:

- SQA being Scotland's principal Awarding Body (7%)

- Respondents not having heard anything negative about SQA (6%)

- A belief that SQA is efficient/competent (6%)

- Respondents having encountered no previous problems with SQA (6%)

- A belief that SQA has high standards (5%)

When the outcomes noted in Figure 17 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:

- <u>SQA being a well-known/well-established organisation</u>: Training Providers (31%), Colleges (24%), Schools (22%) and Employers (20%)

- <u>A belief that SQA has effective exam marking procedures</u>: Young Potential Candidates (20%) and Mature Potential Candidates (18%)

- <u>A belief that SQA has high standards</u>: Colleges (9%), Schools (9%) and Employers (7%)

"Why did you provide this rating?"

**Figure 18: Reason for Providing Low Rating of SQA Credibility
(Unprompted) - Highly Indicative (2019)**
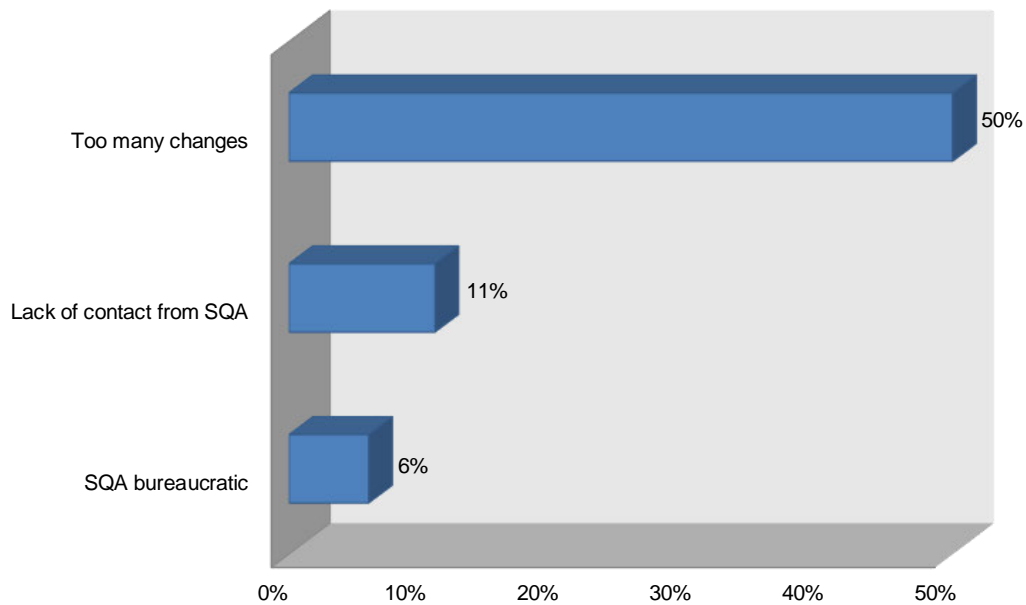
Base: Very Low/Fairly Low in Figure 16

When respondents who believed SQA to have low credibility were asked – again, on an unprompted basis – why this was the case, Figure 18 indicates that the principal response provided was that of *too many changes relating to SQA* (50%).

It should be stressed, however, that, due to the small subsample of respondents to which this question was relevant (and therefore was asked of), the outcomes presented in Figure 18 are highly indicative in nature.

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"Did you know that SQA offers any of the following?"

Figure 19: Awareness of SQA Offering Services

Base: Employers & Training Providers
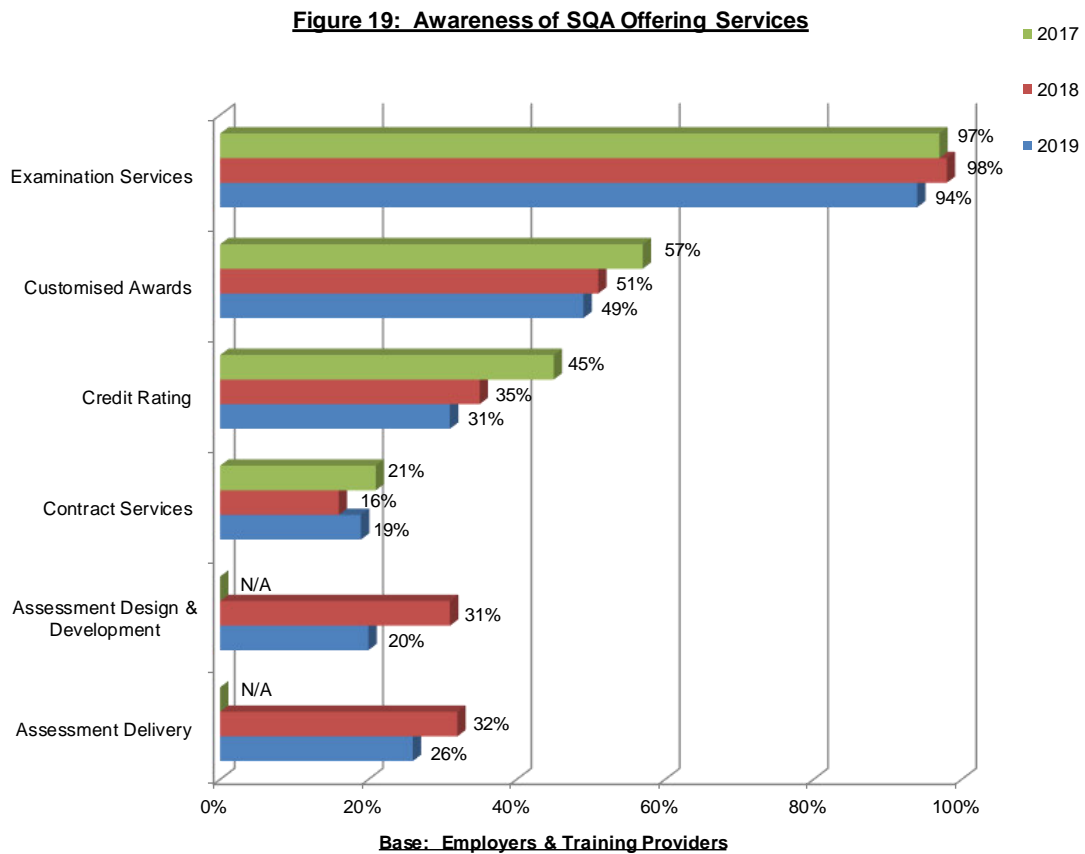
Figure 19 indicates that well over 9 out of 10 **Employers** and **Training Providers** in 2019 (94%) stated that they were aware that SQA offers *Examination Services – providing marking, results and certification services to other organisations.* This outcome is very similar to those found in 2017 and 2018 (97% and 98% respectively).

Thereafter, secondary awareness was noted by Employers and Training Providers of SQA offering:

- Customised Awards – helping businesses to develop their own bespoke qualifications (49%)
- Credit Rating – allowing training courses or qualifications to be nationally recognised on the SCQF Framework (31%)
- Assessment Delivery – delivering assessments for other organisations (26%)

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- Assessment Design and Development – developing assessments for Government customers in the UK and internationally (20%)[3]
- Contract Services – delivering contracts for other organisations (19%)

Further examination of the data here indicated that **Training Providers** were more likely than Employers to be aware of the following SQA services under consideration:

- Contract Services (24% compared to 14% for Employers)
- Customised Awards (52% compared to 46%)
- Examination Services (100% compared to 89%)

In contrast, **Employers** were more likely than Training Providers to be aware that SQA offers the following services:

- Assessment Delivery (30% compared to 23% for Training Providers)
- Credit Rating (35% compared to 28%)

Furthermore, Figure 19 indicates that, between 2018 and 2019, there was a decline in the extent to which awareness was noted of SQA offering two services, namely:

- Assessment Design and Development (falling from 31% to 20%)
- Assessment Delivery (falling from 32% to 26%)

Finally, Figure 19 indicates that, between 2017 and 2019, there was a decline in the extent to which awareness was noted of SQA offering two further services, namely:

- Customised Awards (falling from 57% to 49%)

[3] It should be noted that *Assessment Design & Development* and *Assessment Delivery* were included as options for the first time in 2018.

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- Credit Rating (falling from 45% to 31%)

Table 16 below provides a summary of key changes in awareness of SQA offering a range of services between 2018 and 2019.

Table 16: Awareness of SQA Service Offerings – 2018/2019

	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Assessment Design & Development	None	None	Employers	Training Providers
Assessment Delivery	None	None	None	Training Providers
Contract Services	None	None	None	None
Customised Awards	None	None	Training Providers	None
Examination Services	None	None	Employers	None
Credit Rating	None	None	Training Providers	None

"Would you consider using any of these services?"

Figure 20: Would Consider Using SQA Services
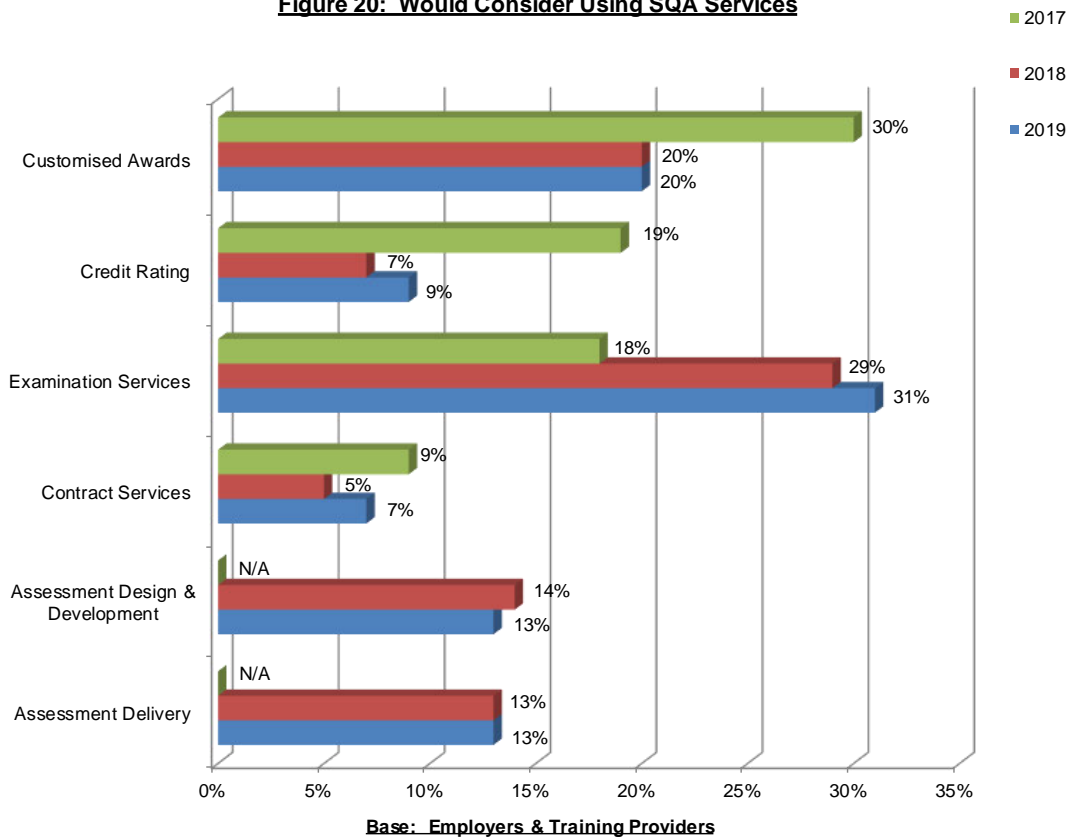
Figure 20 indicates that almost a third of **Employers** and **Training Providers** in 2019 (31%) stated that they would consider using *SQA Examination Services*. This continues to represent an increase which has been apparent in this regard since 2017, at which time less than 1 in 5 respondents (18%) stated that they would consider using such services.

Figure 20 also indicates that 1 in 5 **Employers** and **Training Providers** in 2019 (20%) stated they would consider using *Customised Awards*. This outcome is identical to that found in 2018, but somewhat lower than that found in 2017 (30%).

Thereafter, there was a more limited extent to which **Employers** and **Training Providers** in 2019 stated that they would consider using:

- Assessment Design and Development (13%)
- Assessment Delivery (13%)
- Credit Rating Services (9%)
- Contract Services (7%)

It should be noted that each of the outcomes noted above are identical or very similar to those found in 2018.

Further examination of the data here for 2019 indicated only one service area in relation to which **Training Providers** noted a greater likelihood of use than Employers, namely *Examination Services* (41% compared to 22%).

Table 17 below provides a summary of key changes in considering using each of the SQA services under consideration by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

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Table 17: Consideration of Use of SQA Services – 2018/2019

	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Assessment Design & Development	None	None	None	None
Assessment Delivery	None	None	None	None
Contract Services	None	None	None	None
Customised Awards	None	None	None	None
Examination Services	None	None	None	None
Credit Rating	None	None	None	None

In 2019, a number of questions were asked relating to contact with, and from, SQA.

"Have you contacted the SQA?"

Figure 21: Contacted SQA

Base: All Respondents

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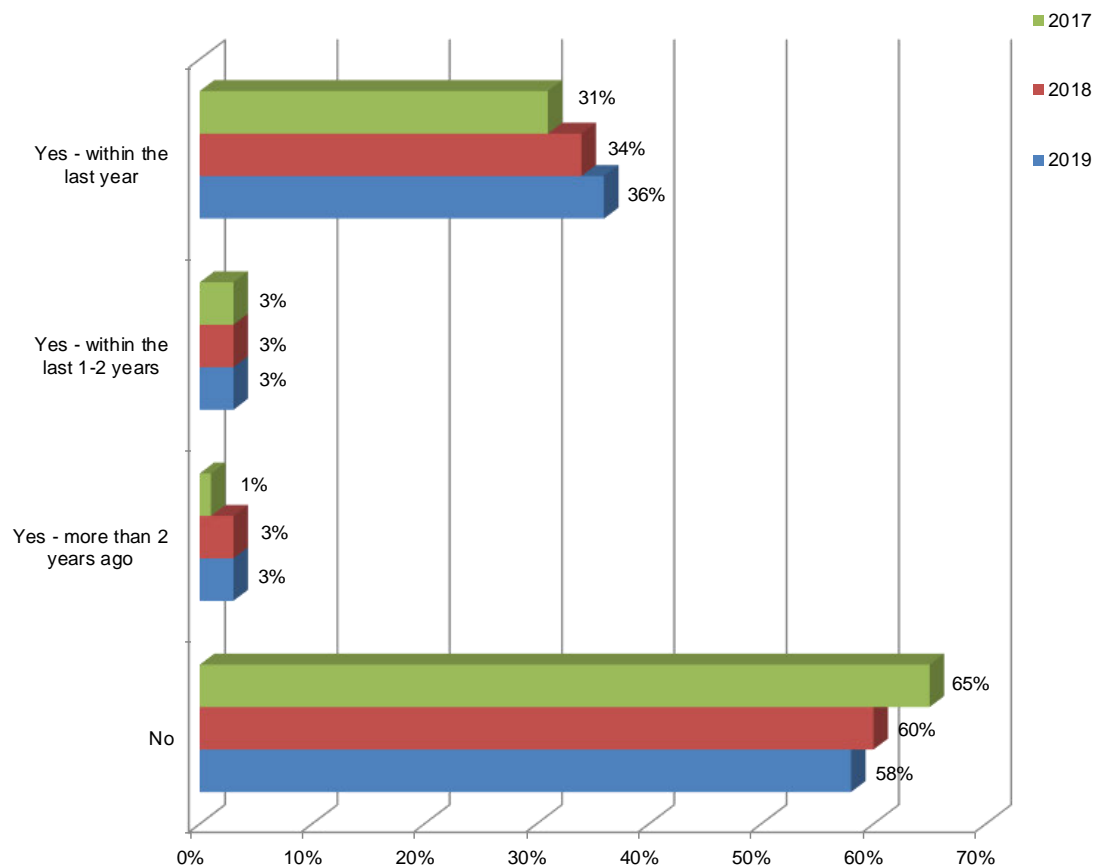
From Figure 21, it can be seen that over 2 out of 5 of those interviewed in 2019 (42%) stated that they had contacted SQA. This figure is very similar to that found in 2018 (40%) but slightly higher than the outcome found in 2017 (35%), and is highest amongst the four Professional Audiences, i.e.:

- Schools (71%)
- Training Providers (68%)
- Colleges (54%)
- Employers (51%)

Figure 21 also indicates that well over a third of respondents aware of SQA in 2019 (36%) stated that they had contacted the Authority *in the last year*. This continues a slight rise which has been apparent in this regard since 2017, at which time this applied to less than a third of respondents (31%).

Further examination of the data for 2019 indicated that contacts with SQA *in the last year* were most common amongst Schools and Training Providers and, thereafter, Colleges and Employers, i.e.:

- Schools (70%)
- Training Providers (64%)
- Colleges (50%)
- Employers (45%)
- Young Potential Candidates (14%)
- Parents (3%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (3%)
- Mature Potential Candidates (0%)

Table 18 provides a summary of key changes in notification of contacts with SQA by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

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Table 18: Changes in Contacts With SQA - 2018/2019

Contacted SQA	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Yes	Mature Potential Candidates & Schools	Employers	Intermediate Potential Candidates & Parents	Young Potential Candidates

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

Figure 22: Rating of Contact(s) With SQA
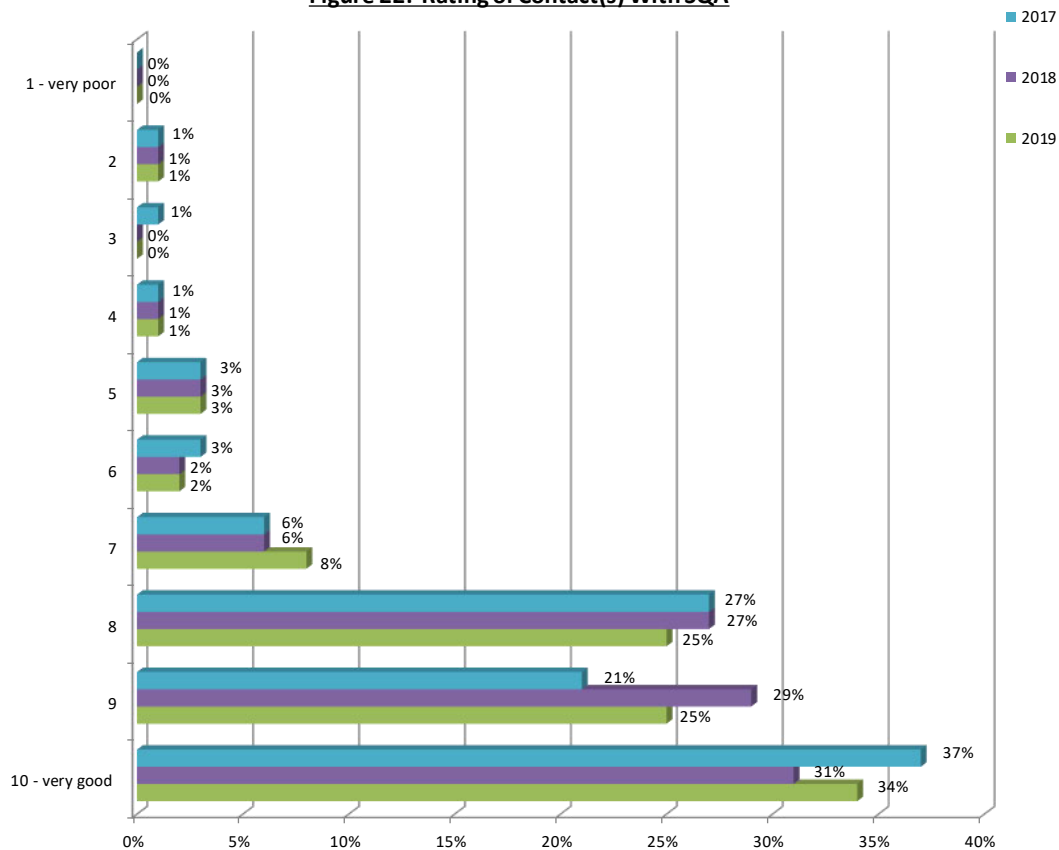
Base: Contacted SQA in the Last 2 Years

Figure 22 provides a rating of contacts with SQA for those who had contacted the Authority in the previous two years and presents a profile for 2019 which is <u>very largely positive</u> in nature. In particular, almost all respondents (97%) provided a rating of more than 5 out of 10 for SQA in this regard, whilst well over 8 out of 10 (84%) provided a rating of 8 or more.

The average score here across all indicators in 2019 was 8.58 out of a possible 10. This outcome is amongst the highest found since this question was first asked in 2013, i.e.:

- 2013 (7.77)
- 2014 (7.97)
- 2015 (8.46)
- 2016 (8.17)
- 2017 (8.55)
- 2018 (8.63)

It is also of interest to note that the highest average ratings for contacts with SQA in the previous two years were found amongst Parents and that the lowest average ratings were found amongst Colleges, i.e.:

- Parents (9.47)
- Young Potential Candidates (8.82)
- Training Providers (8.76)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (8.70)
- Schools (8.69)
- Employers (8.46)
- Mature Potential Candidates (8.45)
- Colleges (8.13)

It should be stressed that the lowest average contact score of 8.13 (noted by Colleges) continues to be highly encouraging from an absolute perspective.

Table 19 provides a profile of average scores here by audience type between 2013 and 2019.

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Table 19: Average Contact Scores – 2013 to 2019

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Young Potential Candidates	7.53	7.98	8.34	8.08	7.85	8.85	8.82
Intermediate Potential Candidates	8.00	7.79	8.29	8.50	8.33	8.75	8.70
Mature Potential Candidates	7.95	7.78	8.26	9.40	7.44	8.80	8.45
Parents	7.59	7.97	8.47	8.64	8.57	8.78	9.47
Colleges	7.56	7.52	8.43	7.98	8.34	8.20	8.13
Schools	8.62	8.01	8.45	8.00	9.19	8.84	8.69
Employers	8.18	8.09	8.48	8.49	8.85	8.51	8.46
Training Providers	8.34	8.40	8.65	8.37	8.37	8.61	8.76

It is of interest to note from Table 19 that, over the past year, average contact scores were similar across the audiences under consideration, with the exception of Parents (for whom the average contact score increased from 8.78 to 9.47 between 2018 and 2019) and Mature Potential Candidates (for whom the average contact score decreased from 8.80 to 8.45 between 2018 and 2019).

"Why did you choose this rating number?"

Figure 23: Reason for Providing Good Rating of Contact With SQA (Unprompted) - 2019
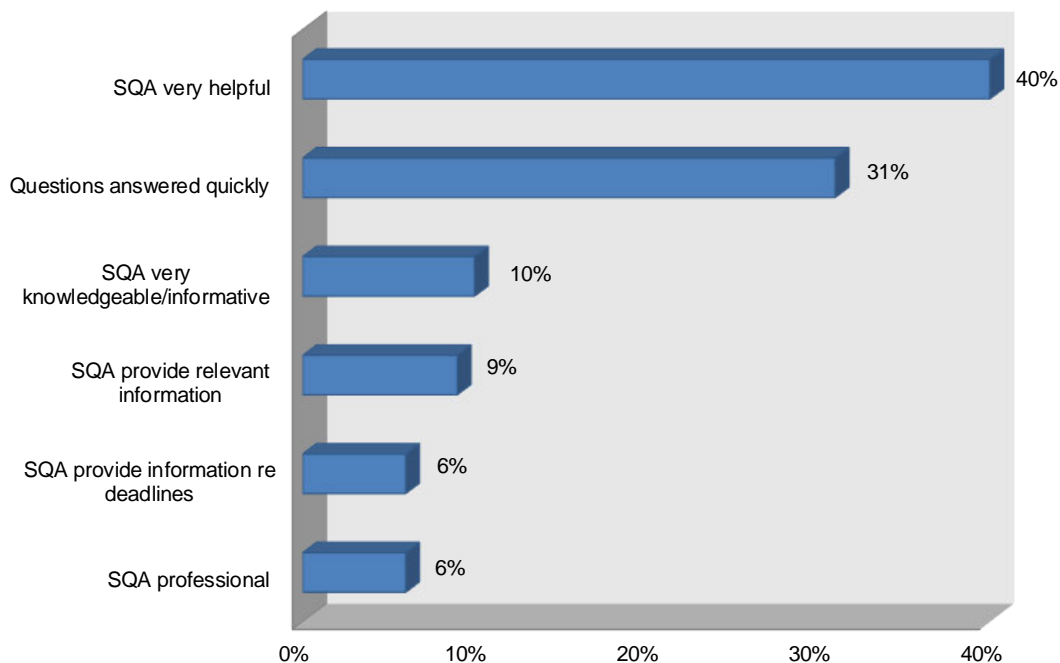
Base: Professional Audiences Only - Rating 6 to 10 in Figure 22

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When **Colleges, Schools, Employers** and **Training Providers** who provided a rating of 6 or more out of 10 in terms of their contacts with SQA in the previous two years were asked – on an unprompted basis – why they provided this rating, Figure 23 indicates that the principal reasons cited were those of:

- SQA being very helpful (40%)
- Questions being answered quickly by SQA (31%)

Further examination of the data here indicated that the following variances were apparent in terms of these two responses, namely:

- SQA being very helpful: most commonly cited by Training Providers and Schools (47% and 44% respectively)
- Questions being answered quickly by SQA: most commonly cited by Schools (40%)

"Have you had contact from the SQA?"

Figure 24: Contact From SQA

Base: All Respondents
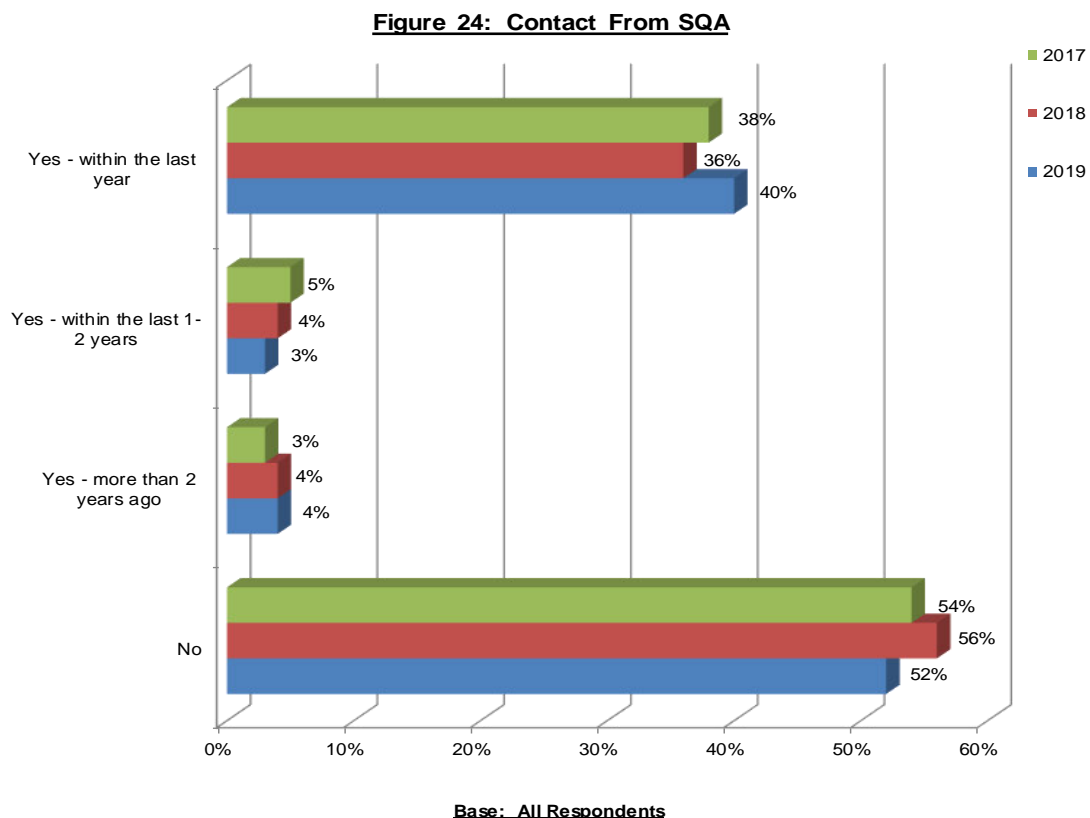
From Figure 24, it can be seen that almost half of respondents interviewed in 2019 (47%) stated that they had had contact <u>from</u> SQA, with highest levels of contact being noted by Young Potential Candidates, Schools and Training Providers, i.e.:

- Young Potential Candidates (71%)
- Schools (66%)
- Training Providers (60%)
- Colleges (43%)
- Employers (43%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (32%)
- Mature Potential Candidates (24%)
- Parents (17%)

It should also be noted that levels of contact <u>from</u> SQA for 2019 were <u>very similar</u> to those found in 2017 and 2018 (46% and 44% respectively).

Figure 24 also indicates that 2 out of 5 respondents in 2019 (40%) specifically stated that they had had contact <u>from</u> SQA *in the last year*. This figure is <u>broadly in line</u> with those found in 2017 and 2018 (38% and 36% respectively).

Further examination of the data indicated that contacts <u>from</u> SQA *in the last year* were most common amongst Young Potential Candidates, Schools and Training Providers, i.e.:

- Young Potential Candidates (67%)
- Schools (63%)
- Training Providers (57%)
- Colleges (39%)
- Employers (38%)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (16%)

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- Parents (6%)

- Mature Potential Candidates (3%)

Table 20 below provides a summary of key changes in terms of contacts <u>from</u> SQA in the previous two years by respondent type between 2018 and 2019.

<u>Table 20: Changes in Contacts From SQA - 2018/2019</u>

Contact from SQA	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Yes	Schools	Mature Potential Candidates & Employers	None	Parents

"Overall, how would you rate the contact or contacts you had from the SQA on scale from 1 to 10, where '1' is <u>very poor</u> and '10' is <u>very good</u>?"

Figure 25: Rating of Contact(s) From SQA in Last 2 Years
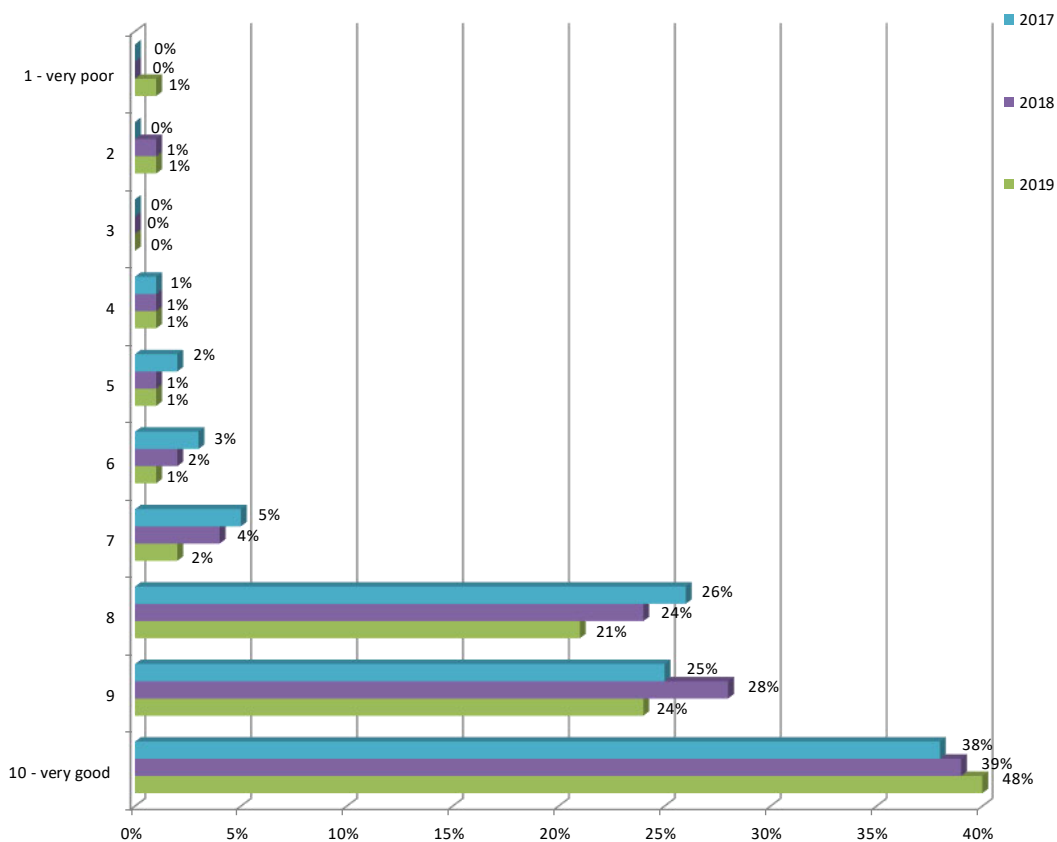
<u>Base: Contact From SQA in the Last 2 Years</u>

Figure 25 provides a profile of contacts <u>from</u> SQA – amongst those who had received such contacts in the previous two years – and indicates that almost all respondents in 2019 (97%) provided a rating of more than 5 out of a possible 10 in this regard and over 9 out of 10 (93%) provided a rating of 8 or more.

It should also be noted that the average score for contacts <u>from</u> SQA in 2019 was 8.98 out of a possible 10. This figure is the highest found since this question was first asked in 2013, i.e.:

- 2013 (8.15)
- 2014 (8.00)
- 2015 (8.59)
- 2016 (8.05)
- 2017 (8.72)
- 2018 (8.82)

It is also of interest to note that the average scores in 2019 were highest amongst the Public Audiences, i.e.:

- Parents (9.61)
- Young Potential Candidates (9.41)
- Mature Potential Candidates (9.39)
- Intermediate Potential Candidates (9.27)
- Training Providers (8.93)
- Employers (8.73)
- Colleges (8.67)
- Schools (8.65)

Again, it should be stressed that the lowest average contact score of 8.65 (noted by Schools) continues to be highly encouraging from an absolute perspective.

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Finally, Table 21 provides a profile of changing average scores by audience type between 2013 and 2019.

Table 21: Average Contact Scores From SQA – 2013 to 2019

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Young Potential Candidates	7.54	8.05	8.47	8.16	8.67	9.00	9.41
Intermediate Potential Candidates	8.22	8.44	8.35	8.12	8.59	8.97	9.27
Mature Potential Candidates	7.91	8.34	8.51	8.77	8.44	9.64	9.39
Parents	8.29	8.09	8.67	8.96	8.95	9.00	9.61
Colleges	7.71	7.30	8.38	8.00	8.71	8.61	8.67
Schools	8.56	7.47	8.69	7.47	9.07	8.69	8.65
Employers	8.53	8.13	8.46	8.42	8.77	8.87	8.73
Training Providers	8.67	8.80	8.90	8.43	8.52	8.62	8.93

It is of interest to note from Table 21 that, over the past year, there were notable increases in the average contact scores noted by *Young Potential Candidates* (rising from 9.00 to 9.41)*, Intermediate Potential Candidates* (rising from 8.97 to 9.27)*, Parents* (rising from 9.00 to 9.61) and *Training Providers* (rising from 8.62 to 8.93).

"Why did you choose this rating number?"

Figure 26: Reasons for Choosing High Rating of Contacts from SQA (Unprompted) - 2019
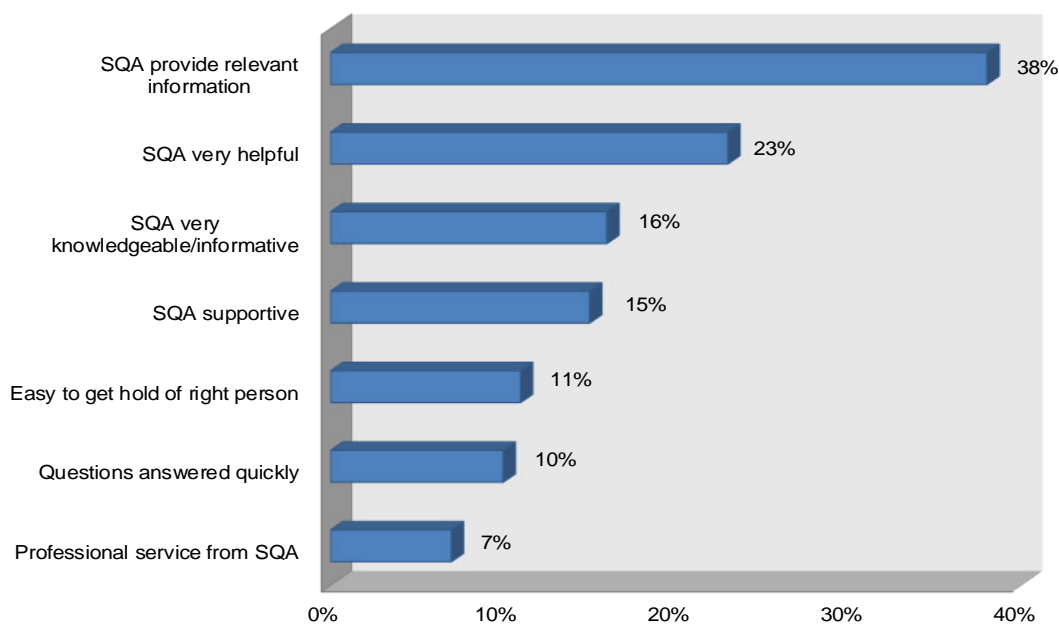
Base: Professional Audiences Only - Rating 6 to 10 in Figure 25

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When **Colleges, Schools, Employers** and **Training Providers** providing a rating of 6 or more out of 10 in terms of their contacts <u>from</u> SQA in the previous two years were asked – on an unprompted basis – why they had done so, Figure 26 indicates that the **principal reason** cited was that of *SQA providing relevant information* (38%).

Thereafter, secondary mention was made here in this regard of a number of other factors, including:

- SQA being very helpful (23%)
- SQA being very knowledgeable and informative (16%)
- SQA being supportive (15%)

Further examination of the data here indicated that there were a number of notable variances in terms of the outputs cited in Figure 26 and, in particular, that a number of these outcomes were most commonly cited by the respondent types indicated below:

- <u>SQA being very knowledgeable and informative</u>: Colleges (23%)
- <u>SQA being supportive</u>: Training Providers (26%)
- <u>Being easy to get hold of the right person at SQA</u>: Schools, Employers and Colleges (15%, 13% and 10% respectively)
- <u>SQA providing a professional service</u>: Schools and Employers (both 10%)

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

Figure 27: SQA Profile - Agree/Agree + Strongly Agree
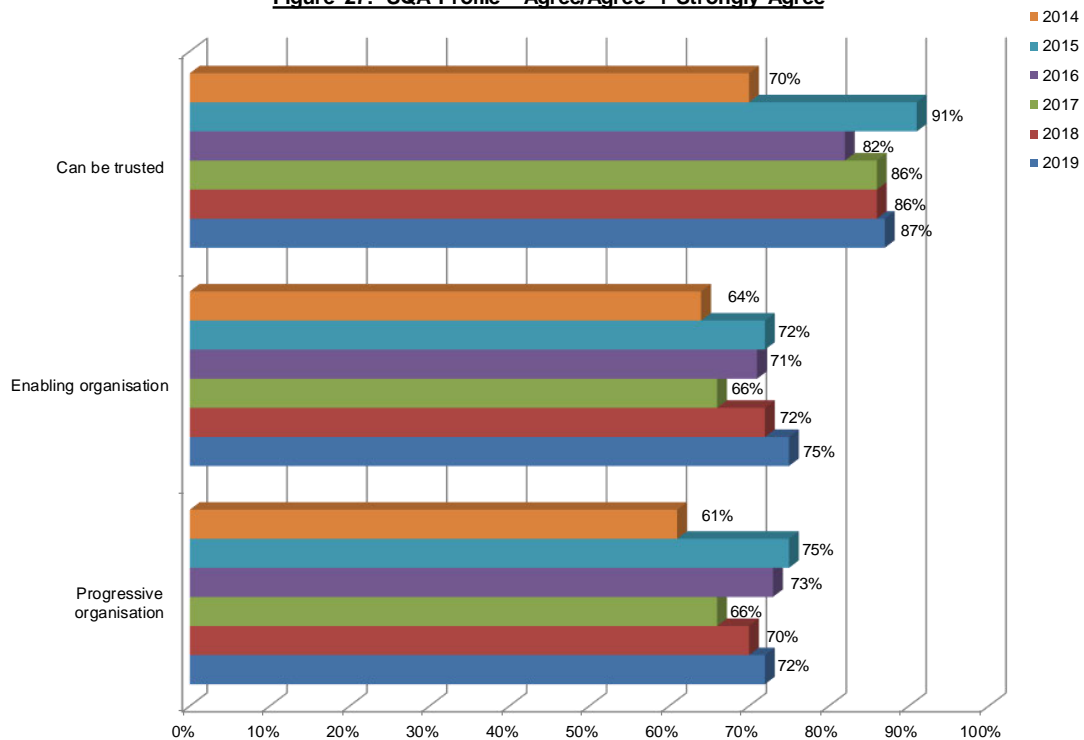
Base: All Respondents

Figure 28: SQA Profile - Strongly Agree
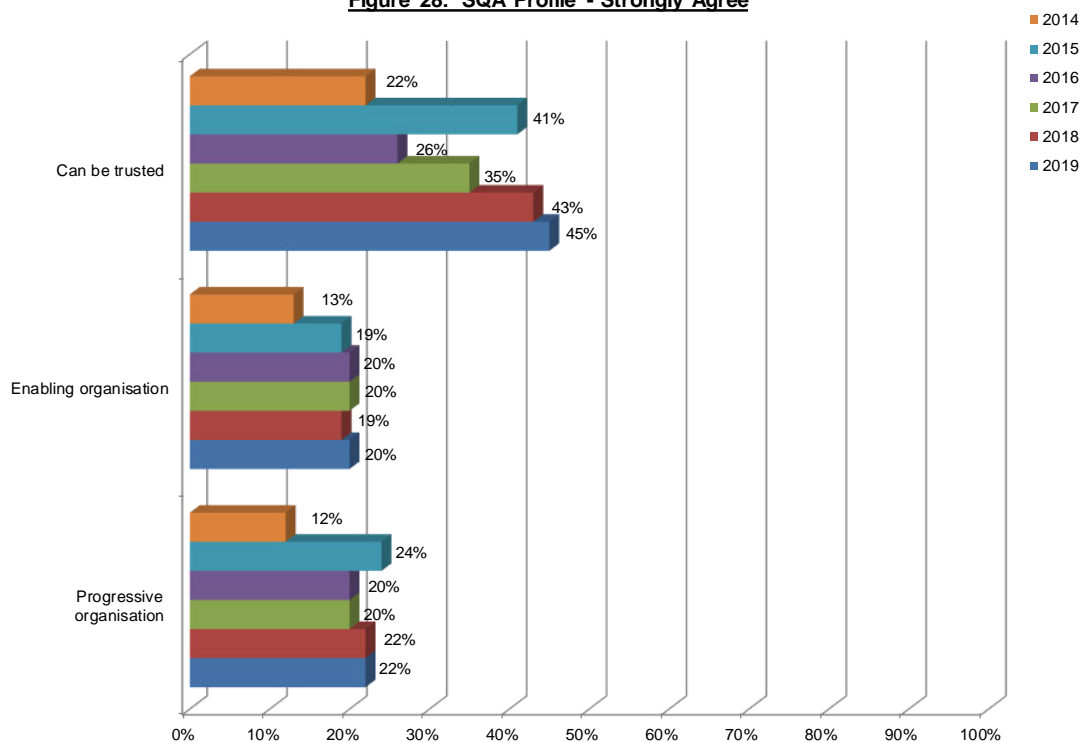
Base: All Respondents

Figure 29: SQA Profile - Disagree & Strongly Disgree

Legend: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

Can be trusted: 3%, 4%, 2%, 1%, 3%, 2%

Enabling organisation: 5%, 3%, 4%, 4%, 5%, 4%

Progressive organisation: 3%, 3%, 4%, 3%, 5%, 3%
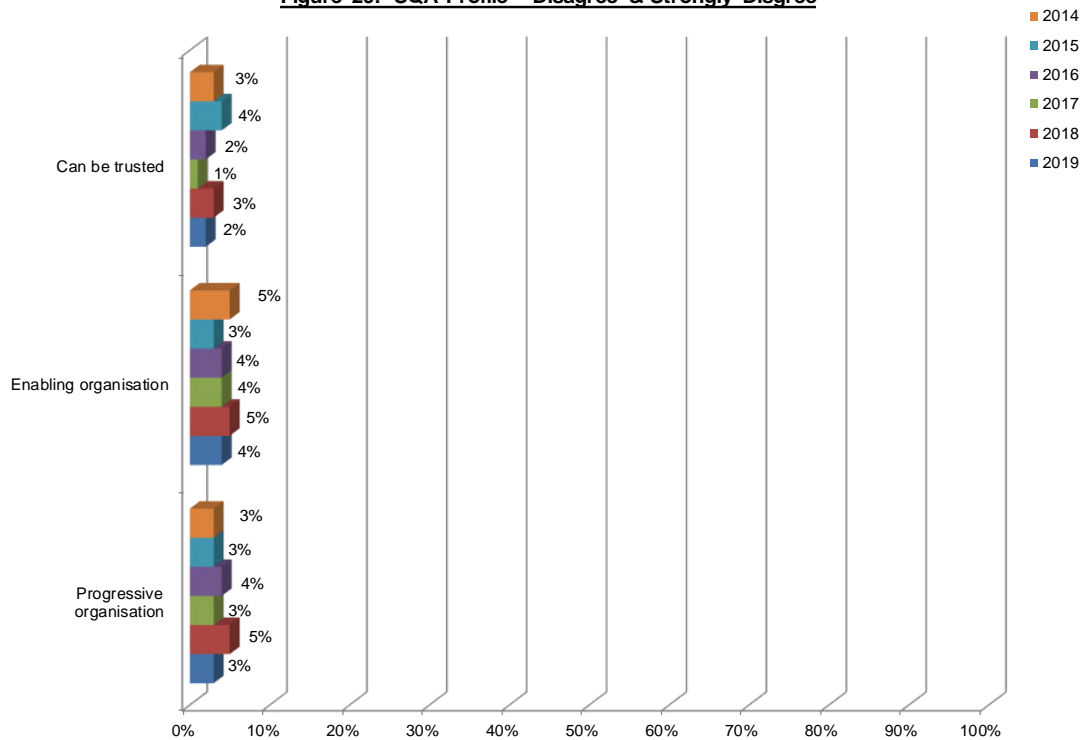
Base: All Respondents

Figure 30: SQA Profile - Don't Know

Legend: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

Can be trusted: 27%, 5%, 16%, 13%, 7%, 5%

Enabling organisation: 31%, 25%, 25%, 30%, 17%, 12%

Progressive organisation: 36%, 22%, 23%, 31%, 16%, 12%

Base: All Respondents

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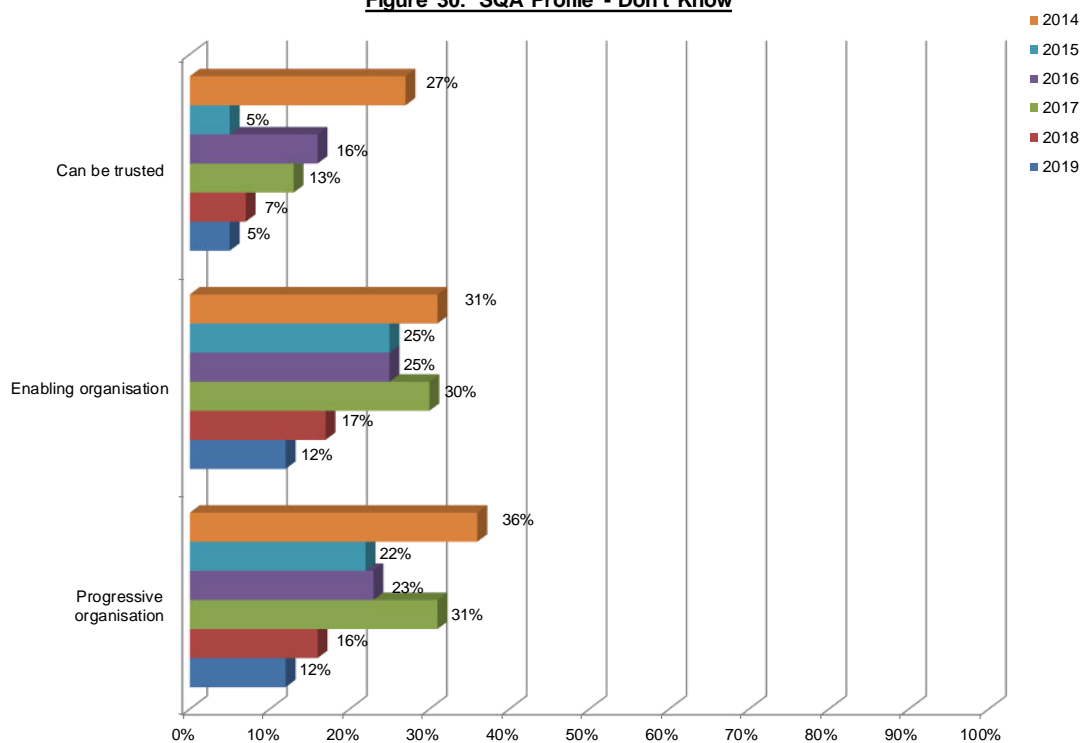
All respondents interviewed in 2019 were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with three statements about SQA. In 2014 and 2015, this question was only asked of the Professional Audiences (i.e. Schools, Colleges, Training Providers and Employers). Accordingly, the data presented in Figures 27 to 30 is only directly comparable for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 when this question was asked of **all** audiences (i.e. including Young Potential Candidates, Intermediate Potential Candidates, Mature Potential Candidates and Parents).

Nonetheless, Figure 27 indicates that, in 2019, approaching 9 out of 10 respondents (87%) agreed that *SQA can be trusted*, whilst this applied to three quarters of respondents (75%) in relation to *SQA enabling organisations to carry out their roles more effectively* and over 7 out of 10 respondents (72%) in relation to *SQA being a progressive organisation*.

Further examination of the data 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>: Parents (79%), Young Potential Candidates (77%), Training Providers (77%) and Mature Potential Candidates (76%)
- <u>SQA can be trusted</u>: Training Providers (94%), Colleges (92%), Employers (92%) and Schools (89%)

It should be noted that there were no notable variances here by audience type in terms of agreement that *SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively* (i.e. the outcomes here were high across all audiences).

It can also be seen from Figure 27 that the outcomes here for 2018 and 2019 across all three indicators are very similar.

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From Figure 28, it can be seen that a proportion of respondents in 2019 specifically <u>strongly agreed</u> with each of these statements, i.e. that SQA:

- Can be trusted (45%)
- Is a progressive organisation (22%)
- Enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively (20%)

Further examination of the data here indicated that <u>strong agreement</u> with each of these statements was highest amongst the respondent types noted below:

- <u>SQA can be trusted</u>: Training Providers (61%), Colleges (55%), Employers (53%) and Schools (51%)
- <u>SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively</u>: Young Potential Candidates (27%) and Intermediate Potential Candidates (26%)

It should be noted that there were no notable variances here in terms of strong agreement that *SQA is a progressive organisation* on the basis of respondent type.

From Figure 28, it can also be seen that the outcomes here for each of the three indicators are identical or almost identical in both 2018 and 2019.

From Figure 29, it can be seen that <u>very few respondents</u> in 2019 (ranging from 2% to 4%) continued to <u>disagree</u> with each of the statements under consideration, with there being no highly notable variances here on the basis of respondent type, although it is of interest to note that the Professional Audiences were more likely to disagree that *SQA is a progressive organisation* (ranging from 5% to 8%) and that *SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively* (ranging from 4% to 10% for Schools).

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Finally, from Figure 30, it can be seen that levels of *don't know* responses to this question were relatively limited in 2019, were slightly lower than those found in 2018 and were notably lower than those found in 2017. Further examination of the data here indicated that *don't know* responses did not vary significantly on the basis of respondent type.

Table 22 provides a summary of key changes in agreement with each of the statements under consideration between 2018 and 2019.

Table 22 – Changes in Agreement with Statements: 2018/2019

Agree	Marginal Increase	Significant Increase	Marginal Decrease	Significant Decrease
Progressive organisation	None	Mature Potential Candidates & Employers	None	None
Enabling organisation	None	Mature Potential Candidates & Employers	None	None
Can be trusted	None	None	None	None

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6.0 KEY MESSAGES FOR SQA

6.1 Qualifications Profile

1. As was the case in 2018, levels of unprompted awareness of a range of key SQA qualifications continue to be high in both absolute terms and in comparison with other academic and vocational qualifications, particularly in relation to *National 5s, Highers, SVQs, HNCs and HNDs*, although, between 2018 and 2019, there were *slight falls* in unprompted awareness of *National 5s, SVQs, HNCs and HNDs*.

2. Again, as was the case in 2018, levels of prompted awareness of National Qualifications continue to be high, particularly in relation to *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3*, *National 4s*, *National 5s*, *Highers*, *Advanced Highers*, *SVQs* and *HNCs/HNDs*. However, over the past year, there has been a *slight fall* in prompted awareness of *National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3, National 4s* and *National 5s*. In contrast, between 2017 and 2019, prompted awareness of *PDAs* has increased.

3. As was the case in 2018, those aware of a qualification tend to believe that they *know enough about it*, particularly in terms of *National 5s, Highers, Advanced Highers, SVQs* and *HNCs/HNDs*.

6.2 Credibility of Scottish Qualifications

4. Those aware of a qualification continue to tend to believe it to have high credibility, particularly in relation to *National 5s, Highers, Advanced Highers, SVQs, HNCs/HNDs* and *PDAs*. Indeed, over the past year, there has been little change in terms of perceived credibility of most of the qualifications under consideration, although during that time, there was a rise in the perceived high credibility of *Advanced Highers* and *PDAs*.

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5. As has been the case through time, for a core of respondents in 2019, their overall views on the credibility of Scottish qualifications of which they were aware had changed over the previous year. In this regard, it is of interest to note that a significant majority of these respondents stated that their views had become *more positive* (with this continuing to reflect a significant degree of variability which has been apparent in this regard through time).

6.3 Developing the Young Workforce

6. In 2019, most respondents interviewed had heard of DYW, with this figure changing little over the last two years and being at its highest in 2019 amongst *Colleges, Schools* and, thereafter, *Training Providers, Young Potential Candidates* and *Employers*.

7. Most of those who are aware of DYW continue to believe that they have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of it. Indeed, over the last year, there has been a *slight increase* in these beliefs. Despite this, some of those aware of DYW continue to believe that they have a poorly developed knowledge and understanding of it, particularly *Parents*.

8. In 2019, two thirds of those interviewed believed DYW was relevant to themselves or their organisation (with perceived relevance of DYW being highest amongst *Colleges, Young Potential Candidates, Employers* and *Training Providers).* Indeed, since 2017, there has been a steady increase apparent in this regard across all audiences taken collectively.

9. As was the case a year ago, *Colleges, Schools, Employers* and *Training Providers* collectively view SQA as the source they would be most likely to use to find out more about DYW. However, *colleagues, local colleges* and *local schools* are also likely to have a role to play in this regard for these audiences collectively.

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6.4   SQA Profile

10. As has been the case through time, the vast majority of those interviewed in 2019 were aware of SQA. Although this figure continues to be high across each of the audiences participating in the research, it is *slightly lower* than was the case a year ago. Thereafter, the vast majority of those aware of SQA believe that they *know enough about* SQA (although this is *slightly less* likely to be the case than a year ago).

11. The vast majority of those aware of SQA continue to believe the Authority to have high credibility and, indeed, there has been a notable rise in this regard over the past two years. Perceptions of the high credibility of SQA are high across all audiences, particularly amongst the *Professional Audiences*, *Young Potential Candidates* and *Intermediate Potential Candidates.*

12. As has been the case through time, there also continues to be little evidence of perceived low credibility of SQA amongst those aware of the Authority, with the vast majority of those who do not believe the Authority to have high credibility feeling unable to express an opinion in this regard rather than believing SQA to have low credibility.

13. As has been the case over the past two years, virtually all Employers and Training Providers collectively continue to be aware that SQA offers *Examination Services*. However, there continues to be more limited awareness amongst these two audiences collectively of the Authority offering *Customised Awards* and, in particular, *Credit Rating Services, Contract Services, Assessment Delivery Services* and *Assessment Design and Development Services*. It should be noted that, over the past two years, there has been a decline awareness (amongst *Employers* and *Training Providers* collectively) of SQA offering *Customised Awards* and *Credit Rating Services*, with this also being apparent over the past

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year in terms of SQA delivering *Assessment Delivery* and *Assessment Design and Development Services*.

14. Employers and Training Providers collectively expressed a notable degree of interest in making use of SQA's *Examination Services* (particularly *Training Providers*), with there also being a notable degree of interest in terms of making use of *SQA's Customised Awards*.

15. There continue to be notable levels of contact <u>with</u> SQA, particularly amongst *Schools, Training Providers* and, thereafter, *Colleges* and *Employers*, with levels of contact with the Authority increasing slightly over the past two years.

16. Levels of satisfaction with these contacts continue to be high and, indeed, the overall level of satisfaction noted in 2019 were amongst the highest since this question was first asked six years ago and is consistently high across all audiences.

17. There continues to be a notable degree of contact <u>from</u> SQA (with this being most commonly noted by *Young Potential Candidates, Schools, Training Providers* and, thereafter, *Colleges* and *Employers*).

18. Levels of satisfaction with these contacts continue to be high (both overall and for all audiences) and, in 2019, were the highest since this question was first asked in 2013.

19. As has been the case through time, the overwhelming majority of those participating in the research believe that SQA *can be trusted*, with this applying to a significant majority of respondents in relation to believing that *SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively* and is *a progressive organisation*. Indeed, over the past two years, there has been an increasing extent to which SQA is viewed as being an *enabling* and *progressive organisation*. It should also be noted that very few respondents continue to believe

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that SQA does <u>not</u> possess each of the three attributes noted above.

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APPENDIX I

ASHBROOK RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY LTD
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TEL: ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

PROJECT: SQA – Stakeholder Tracking Research – Professional Audiences (November/December 2019) (J964)

COLLECT RESPONDENTS DETAILS:
Explain that there is a one in ten chance that a supervisor may contact them to confirm the accuracy of the interview.

Name: _____

Address: _____

              _____

Postcode: _____

Tel No: _____

CLOSE INTERVIEW BY READING OUT STATEMENT:
"Thank you very much for your help. Can I remind you that this was a bona fide market research interview conducted within the Market Research Society code of practice by Ashbrook Research and Consultancy Limited. If you would like to check that we are a bona fide market research agency then you can call Freefone Market Research on ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ **If you would like to view our company's general Privacy Policy, please visit the Ashbrook Research website. If you would like to see the Privacy Information Notice for this project, please email privacy@ashbrookresearch.co.uk and quote J964".**

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION:
I declare that this interview was carried out according to instructions, within the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct and that the respondent was not previously known to me.

Job No: _9_   _6_   _4_   Int. Name: _____

Int. No: ___   ___   ___   Signature: _____

Que No: ___   ___   ___   Date: _____

Edited by: _____   Coded by: _____

INTERVIEWER - READ OUT

"Good morning/afternoon. I'm _____ from Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd. We have been commissioned by a Public Sector Body to carry out a survey about qualifications and skills. You have been selected at random to take part in this survey. I wonder if you could spare some time to answer a few questions. Your answers will completely anonymous and your personal details will not be shared with anyone outwith our company."

1. **(Researcher – ask this question of Training Providers and Employers only)** Apart from exams, what is the <u>main</u> thing you think SQA does? **(Record <u>one</u> response only. Do Not Prompt).**

<u>Route</u>

_____ Q2

2. Can you tell me the names of any current academic or vocational qualifications that you are aware of? **(Probe Fully. Do Not Prompt. Code <u>all</u> identified by respondent)**

		Route
Advanced Highers	1	
City & Guilds	1	
Customised or Tailored Awards	1	
Highers/Higher Grades/Higher Levels	1	
HNCs	1	
HNDs	1	
Intermediate Levels 1 & 2	1	
National 1s	1	
National 2s	1	
National 3s	1	
National 4s	1	
National 5s	1	
National Certificates	1	
National Progression Awards (NPAs)	1	
National Qualifications	1	
Professional Development Awards (PDAs)	1	
Standard Grades	1	
SVQs	1	
Other	1	Q3

3. Have you heard of the following qualifications? **(Code in Col Q3)**

4. Do you think you know enough about these qualifications? **(Code in Col Q4 - only for 'Yes' in Q3)**

5. How would you rate the credibility of these qualifications? **(Code in Col Q5 - only for 'Yes' in Q3)**

	Col Q3		Col Q4		Col Q5					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	Q6

6.   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	Q7
Yes – my views have become less positive	2	Q8
No	3	Q9

7.   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>

_____
_____
_____   Q9

8.   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>

_____
_____
_____   Q9

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

		Route
Yes	1	Q10
No	2	Q11

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

		Route
Very well developed	1	Q11
Fairly well developed	2	Q11
Fairly poorly developed	3	Q11
Very poorly developed	4	Q11

11. ***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	Q12
Fairly relevant	2	Q12
Of little/no relevance	3	Q12
Don't know	4	Q12

12. 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) _____	1	Q13

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

		Route
Yes	1	Q14
No	2	Q29

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

		Route
Yes	1	Q15
No	2	Q15

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

		Route
Very High	1	Q16
Fairly High	2	Q16
Fairly Low	3	Q17
Very Low	4	Q17
Can't Say	5	Q19

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

Route
CHECK
INSTRUCTION
BELOW

_____
_____
_____

Training Providers & Employers – go to Q18
Colleges & Schools – go to Q20

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

_____

_____

_____

Training Providers & Employers – go to Q18
Colleges & Schools – go to Q20

18. Did you know that SQA offers any of the following?

	Yes	No	Route
Assessment Design & Development – developing assessments for government customers in the UK & internationally	1	2	
Assessment Delivery – delivering assessments for other organisations	1	2	
Contract Services – delivering contracts for other organisations	1	2	
Customised Awards – helping businesses to develop their own bespoke qualifications	1	2	
Examination Services – providing marking, results & certification services to other organisations	1	2	
Credit Rating – allowing training courses or qualifications to be nationally recognised on the SCQF Framework	1	2	Q19

19. Would you consider using any of these services?

	Yes	No	Route
Assessment Design & Delivery	1	2	
Assessment Delivery	1	2	
Contract Services	1	2	
Customised Awards	1	2	
Examination Services	1	2	
Credit Rating	1	2	Q20

20. Have you contacted the SQA?

		Route
Yes – within the last year	1	Q21
Yes – within the last 1-2 years	2	Q21
Yes – more than 2 years ago	3	Q21
No	4	Q24

21. 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	Q22
2	2	Q22
3	3	Q22
4	4	Q22
5	5	Q22
6	6	Q23
7	7	Q23
8	8	Q23
9	9	Q23
10	10	Q23

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

Route

_____
_____
_____   Q24

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

Route

_____
_____
_____   Q24

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

		Route
Yes – within the last year	1	Q25
Yes – within the last 1-2 years	2	Q25
Yes – more than 2 years ago	3	Q25
No	4	Q28

25. 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	Q26
2	2	Q26
3	3	Q26
4	4	Q26
5	5	Q26
6	6	Q27
7	7	Q27
8	8	Q27
9	9	Q27
10	10	Q27

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

Route

_____
_____
_____   Q28

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

Route

_____

_____

_____   Q28

28. 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	Q29
The SQA can be trusted	1	2	3	4	5	6	

29. **Researcher:** complete appropriate details below for respondents:

					Route
Young Potential Candidate	1	Gender: Male / Female	1 / 2	Age: _____	Q30
Intermediate Potential Candidate	2	Gender: Male / Female	1 / 2	Age: _____	Q30
Mature Potential Candidate	3	Gender: Male / Female	1 / 2	Age: _____	Q30
Parent	4	Gender: Male / Female	1 / 2	Age: _____	Q30
College	5	Position: Promoted Post / Other Lecturing Post / Support Staff	1 / 2 / 3		Q30
School	6	Position: Promoted Post / Other Teaching Post / Support Staff	1 / 2 / 3		Q30
Employer	7				Q30
Training Provider	8				Q30

30. Many thanks for taking time to participate in this interview. Would you be happy for us to contact you during the year to take part in other surveys that we undertake on behalf of SQA?

Yes	1
No	2

CLOSE & STATE: This interview has been undertaken on behalf of the Scottish Qualifications Authority by Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd.

APPENDIX II

Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming More Positive – 2001 to 2011

	2001	**2002**	**2003**
SQA learned from mistakes	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Situation has improved	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Higher standards	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Education is improving	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor
Reassured re processes/ procedures	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More choice of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Marking of exams has improved	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Heard more positive views	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More aware of qualifications available	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Better understanding of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Introduction of CfE	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
New curriculum/ qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming More Positive – 2001 to 2011 (cont'd)

	2004	**2005**	**2006**
SQA learned from mistakes	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Situation has improved	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Higher standards	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
Education is improving	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Reassured re processes/ procedures	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More choice of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Marking of exams has improved	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Heard more positive views	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More aware of qualifications available	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Better understanding of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Introduction of CfE	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
New curriculum/ qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

<u>Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming More Positive – 2001 to 2011 (cont'd)</u>

	2007	**2008**	**2009**
SQA learned from mistakes	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Situation has improved	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Higher standards	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Education is improving	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Reassured re processes/ procedures	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More choice of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Marking of exams has improved	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Heard more positive views	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More aware of qualifications available	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Better understanding of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Introduction of CfE	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
New curriculum/ qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

<u>Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming More Positive – 2001 to 2011 (cont'd)</u>

	2010	**2011**
SQA learned from mistakes	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Situation has improved	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Higher standards	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Education is improving	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Reassured re processes/ procedures	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More choice of qualifications	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Marking of exams has improved	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Heard more positive views	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
More aware of qualifications available	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Better understanding of qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Introduction of CfE	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
New curriculum/ qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2001 to 2011

	2001	**2002**	**2003**
Mistakes with exams	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Exams crisis	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Media coverage	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Lack of confidence in SQA	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Impact of mistakes on candidates	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lower standards	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Qualifications less credible	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Too many changes	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Generally getting worse	Not mentioned/ little mention	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 confusing	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2001 to 2011

	2004	**2005**	**2006**
Mistakes with exams	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Exams crisis	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Media coverage	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lack of confidence in SQA	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Impact of mistakes on candidates	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lower standards	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Qualifications less credible	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Too many changes	Primary Factor	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Generally getting worse	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications less valuable	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Too many qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Financial cutbacks in education	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

Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2001 to 2011

	2007	2008	2009
Mistakes with exams	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Exams crisis	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Media coverage	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Lack of confidence in SQA	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Impact of mistakes on candidates	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lower standards	Primary Factor	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Qualifications less credible	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
Too many changes	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Generally getting worse	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications less valuable	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Too many qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Financial cutbacks in education	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Qualifications confusing	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
Schools not ready for new qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention

Views Expressed re Credibility of Scottish Secondary Education Qualifications Becoming Less Positive – 2001 to 2011

	2010	2011
Mistakes with exams	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Exams crisis	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Media coverage	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lack of confidence in SQA	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Impact of mistakes on candidates	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Lower standards	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Qualifications less credible	Primary Factor	Primary Factor
Too many changes	Secondary Factor	Secondary Factor
Generally getting worse	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications less valuable	Secondary Factor	Primary Factor
Too many qualifications	Secondary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Financial cutbacks in education	Primary Factor	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications confusing	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention
Qualifications don't lead to jobs	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Exams too easy to pass	Not mentioned/ little mention	Secondary Factor
Schools not ready for new qualifications	Not mentioned/ little mention	Not mentioned/ little mention