COVID -19 CONTINGENCY PLANNING March 2020

NQGA DELIVERY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

a. Current Position

Background

National Qualification Group Awards (NQGA) is the term which covers National Certificates (NCs) and National Progression Awards (NPAs).

NPAs and NCs qualifications are relevant to anyone, including those considering self-employment. These qualifications are delivered across our school, college and ETP centres. Historically, NCs are regarded as a 'college course' and in the main, provide progression to HNCs and other college provision. Some are offered in partnership with schools, and in a small number of cases, ETPs deliver these. There are also a number of NCs which are included within the SWAP programme, allowing adult learners access to degree programmes. NPAs are again delivered across our schools, colleges and ETPs. Currently we have approx. 400 centres with 40,000 candidate entries.

NCs are 12 credit qualifications at SCQF levels 4 -6 and 9 credit at level 3. NPAs are available at SCQF level 2 through to 6 and range in size – in the main they are between 2 and 4 credits. Some NCs and NPAs attract UCAS tariff points. A number of units from these courses are used by colleges as part of college certificated courses and access courses. Both qualifications are internally assessed and externally quality assured.

Each centre could potentially be at different stages of delivery of these courses. NPAs, for example, are often delivered later in the term for senior phase. For NCs, it is unlikely that all candidates will have completed the coursework and assessment. Some candidates may be in a position to continue this remotely, whilst others will be unable to continue. It should be noted that for college candidates studying for NCs, the vast majority continue progress to other college courses, college candidates would, most certainly, be given the opportunity of addressing any gaps in skills in knowledge when access is available to college buildings.

When reviewing the options available for delivery and quality assurance of these qualifications, consideration has been made to the recent guidance provided to both schools and colleges on HN and NQ provision, together with the recommendations of the college principal's forum.

OPTIONS

Option 1

SQA continue to require schools, colleges and ETPs to work within the normal requirements for full delivery and assessment.

Consideration

This will result in a significant number of candidates not receiving certificates.

Option 2
For those candidates where evidence exists for the qualification, however, not for all outcomes, and where there conditions of assessment and resources required for assessment are not available – SQA allow outcomes of learning across the course to be examined to identify if they have been met and centres estimate individual student success.

If outcomes have not been met, existing evidence is examined to determine if this provides assessment evidence, or an appropriate key assessment piece is devised and used to gather evidence of missing outcomes.

Consideration
As with the HN model, further guidance will require to be produced to centres on how they should approach this. This is the preferred approach by college principals.

Recommendation

Option 2 is the recommended approach. This gives parity in guidance for other self-regulated qualifications.

It is recommended that verification activity is stood down, again in line with the approach for HN and NQ, however, we would retain the right to carry out remote verification in any potential areas of high risk.

Note – further work will be required to establish those candidates on the SWAP programme and are expecting to move on to higher education, particularly where there is outstanding practical assessment.