Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

REPORT (FINAL DRAFT)

KEY AUDIENCE RESEARCH – SCHOOL AUDIENCES

January 2024

PREPARED FOR: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Report (Final Draft)

Key Audience Research – School Audiences

Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd

January 2024

Project Contacts

Report prepared for: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Simon Allan	**Phone: 0346 213 6840**
Senior Research Manager, Business Intelligence Services	**E-mail: Simon.Allan@sqa.org.uk**

Marina Martinolli	
Senior Research Officer	**E-mail: Marina.Martinolli@sqa.org.uk**

Report prepared by: Ashbrook Research & Consultancy Ltd

Dr David Brooks	**Phone: 0141 226 3798**
Managing Director	**E-mail: david@ashbrookresearch.co.uk**

British Assessment Bureau

ISO 9001
QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SQA Profile

- Overall, just over half of respondents in November/December 2023 rated SQA's credibility as being high. However, over a third believed SQA to have low credibility

- Between February/March 2023 and November 2023, there was a notable increase in the extent to which, overall, respondents believed SQA to have high credibility and a fall in the extent to which respondents, overall, rated SQA as having low credibility

- Those believing SQA to have high credibility in November/December 2023 stated that this was primarily due to SQA 'having good and well-recognised qualifications', 'doing a good job', 'being well known and well established' and 'having high standards'

- Those who believed SQA to have low credibility in November/December 2023 stated that this was for a wide range of reasons. No one reason or theme was particularly prevalent

- Respondents in November/December 2023 provided an average score of 6.33 out of a possible 10 in terms of their satisfaction with SQA's performance overall. This represents a rise – from 5.61 – since the last survey

- Overall, seven out of ten respondents in November/December 2023 stated their belief that they knew enough about SQA. This outcome was almost identical to that found in February/March 2023

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

SQA Qualifications Profile

- In November/December 2023, greatest beliefs amongst respondents that they knew enough about SQA qualifications of which they were aware related to 'National 3s', 'National 4s', 'National 5's, 'Highers' and 'Advanced Highers', whilst those qualifications of which respondents were aware and were least likely to state that they knew enough about them included 'National 1s', 'National 2s', 'SVQs', 'HNCs/HNDs' and 'PDAs'

- In the most recent survey, greatest levels of perceived high credibility of qualifications of which respondents were aware related to 'Highers', 'Advanced Highers', 'HNCs/HNDs' and 'SVQs', with lowest levels of perceived high credibility being noted in relation to 'National 1s to National 4s'

- Since the last survey, there was increased perceived high credibility in relation to all of the qualifications under consideration

- In November/December 2023, two thirds of respondents stated that their overall views on the credibility of all of the qualifications they had heard of taken together had not changed over the last year. However, for a quarter of respondents, their views had changed and become 'less positive' and, for 1 in 12, their views had changed and become 'more positive'

- Since the last survey, there was a notable increase in the extent to which, overall, respondents stated that their views had not changed over the last year in relation to the credibility of all of the qualifications they had heard of taken together and a notable decrease in the extent to which views had changed and become less positive

- Those stating that their views had changed and become less positive went on to state their primary reason for this related to 'issues relating to marking'

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

SQA Contact and Communications Profile

- Approaching three out of five respondents in November/December 2023 stated that they had had contact with SQA, with this outcome also being almost identical to that found in February/March 2023

- When respondents in November/December 2023 were asked how they rated their contact with SQA, an average score of 7.22 out of a possible 10 was noted. This compares to an average score of 6.32 in February/ March 2023

- Those who, in November/December 2023, provided a positive rating of SQA in terms of their contacts primarily stated that this was due to 'SQA being helpful during contacts' and 'SQA being quick to respond to queries'

- Respondents in November/December 2023 provided average scores out of a possible 10 – for three aspects of their communications from SQA, namely 'how appropriate the level of detail was' (6.52), 'clarity of communications' (6.49) and 'timeliness of communications' (6.18). In all three cases, these average scores were higher than those found in the last survey

- An average score of 6.44 out of a possible 10 was provided by respondents in November/December 2023 in terms of their overall rating of communications from SQA, with this representing a rise – from 5.55 – since February/March 2023

- Those providing a positive response in terms of their overall rating of SQA's communications in November/December 2023, primarily stated that this was due to 'SQA providing a good service during communications with them', 'receiving regular communication updates', 'communications being clear and easy to understand' and 'communications being informative'

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

- In contrast, for those providing a negative response here, this was primarily due to SQA's 'communications in general being poor' and 'communications being late'

- When respondents in November/December 2023 were asked – on a prompted basis – to note their preferred communications channel, most commonly stated that this was 'direct mail'

- Two thirds of Teachers, those in Management roles and Learners collectively stated that they understood the communications issued to them by SQA, with this being most likely to be the case amongst those in Management roles and least likely to be the case amongst Learners

- Amongst Teachers and those in Management roles collectively in November/December 2023:
  - Three out of five agreed that they receive clear information from SQA that helps them carry out their role
  - Seven out of ten believe that the quantity of emails they receive from SQA is 'about right'
  - Two thirds believe that the frequency of newsletters they receive from SQA is 'about right'

- Learners were relatively evenly split in terms of believing that they receive 'about the right quantity of publications from SQA' or that they 'don't receive enough publications from SQA'

SQA Consultation and Engagement Profile

- When respondents were asked to rate how well SQA consults or engages, an average score of 5.28 out of a possible 10 was noted, with this representing a notable increase since the last survey (from 4.42)

- Those providing a positive rating of SQA consultation and engagement in November/December 2023 primarily stated that this was due to 'SQA

providing a good level of engagement' or 'the amount of consultation by SQA'

- In contrast, those providing a poor rating of SQA communication and engagement primarily stated that this was due to 'a lack of consultation and/or engagement'

SQA's Values Profile

- In November/December 2023, with respect to SQA's values profile:
    - Over half of respondents agreed that 'SQA can be trusted', with one in five noting disagreement in this regard
    - Almost half agreed that 'SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively', with a quarter noting disagreement in this regard
    - Well over two out of five respondents agreed that 'SQA is a progressive organisation', with a quarter noting disagreement in this regard

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report provides interim findings from the fifth phase of a programme of tracking research being undertaken on behalf of SQA – Key Audience Research.

The fifth phase targeted four school audiences, namely:

- Parents and Carers of learners in S4 to S6
- School Learners in S4 to S6
- Teachers in secondary schools
- Those in Management roles teams within secondary schools

The information for parents and carers was collected via face-to-face interviews, whilst online questionnaires were used for the remaining three audiences.

The total number of completed questionnaires for each of these audiences was as follows:

- 250 Parents and Carers of learners in S4 to S6
- 1,104 School Learners in S4 to S6
- 220 Teachers in secondary schools
- 214 members of those in Management roles teams within secondary schools

The data was collected during November and December 2023.

For the purposes of analysis, each of the audiences were weighted equally (to 250 each).

Sections 2.0 to 6.0 inclusive provide the following profiles for:

- SQA

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

- SQA qualifications

- SQA contact and communications

- SQA consultation and engagement

- SQA's values

Within each of these sections, where possible and appropriate:

- Variances between each of the four audiences are noted

- Variances in outcomes from the most recent research and that undertaken in February/March 2023 are noted

All of the variances noted in both regards are statistically significant. It should be stressed that those variances that are cited are the most notable statistically significant variances, but that not all statistically significant variances are cited due to a desire to avoid producing an overly lengthy report.

The statistical tests applied to data to test the significance of variances found in the data samples was determined by the type of data/variable that was being tested and included chi-square tests, t tests and analysis of variance, with SPSS being used to carry out both survey analysis and statistical testing.

In this regard, it should be noted that, in the report produced for the last survey, examination of the data for each of the school audiences indicated that open-ended responses provided were highly disparate in nature and, as such, it was not possible to identify commonalities across the audiences. Accordingly, it is not possible in this report to draw comparisons between the open-ended questions asked in November/December 2023 and those asked in February/March 2023. However, this may be possible for open-ended questions asked in subsequent tranches of the key audience research undertaken amongst the school audiences.

It should also be noted that the outcomes for a number of questions have not been included in this report due the fact that there was an insufficient number of respondents to allow meaningful statistical information to be reported.

Finally, it should be noted that the number of online responses from Learners was significantly in excess of the target of 750. Accordingly, analysis of the open-ended questions is based on a random sample of 750 responses received (as agreed with SQA).

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

2.0   SQA PROFILE

2.1   SQA'S Credibility

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

Figure 1: Rating of Current Credibility of SQA
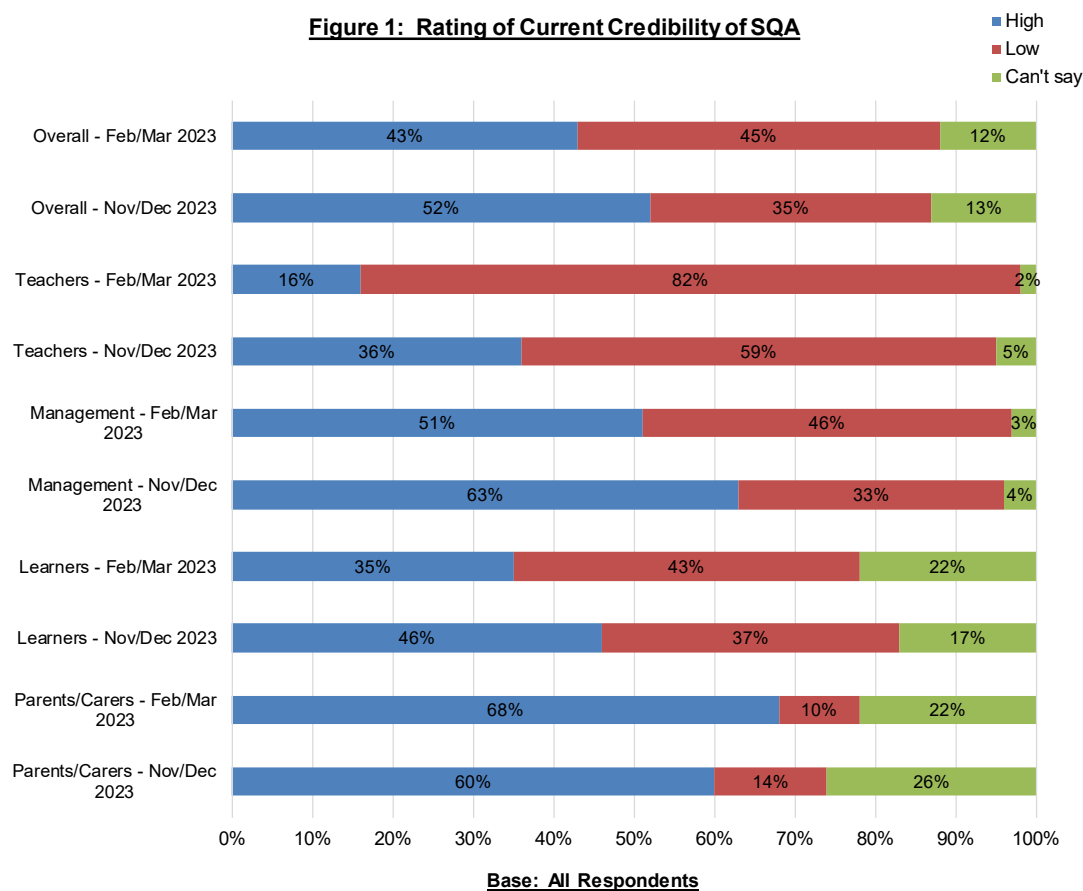
From Figure 1, it can be seen that, overall, just over half of respondents in November/December 2023 (52%) rated SQA's credibility as being **high**, with this outcome being most notable amongst those in Management roles and Parents/Carers and lowest amongst Teachers, ie:

- Those in Management roles (63%)
- Parents/Carers (60%)
- Learners (46%)
- Teachers (36%)

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

Figure 1 also indicates that, overall, over a third of respondents in November/December 2023 (35%) believed SQA to have **low** credibility, with this outcome being highest amongst Teachers and lowest amongst Parents/Carers, ie:

- Teachers (59%)
- Learners (37%)
- Those in Management roles (33%)
- Parents/Carers (14%)

It can also be seen from Figure 1 that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was a notable increase in the extent to which, overall, respondents believed SQA to have **high** credibility (rising from 43% to 52%).

Further examination of the data indicates that this increase was driven by:

- Teachers (rising from 16% to 36%)
- Those in Management roles (rising from 51% to 63%)
- Learners (rising from 35% to 46%)

However, it should be noted that, during that time, there was a decrease in perceived **high** credibility of SQA amongst Parents/Carers (falling from 68% to 60%).

Figure 1 also indicates that, since the last survey, there was a notable fall in the extent to which respondents, overall, rated SQA has having **low** credibility (falling from 45% to 35%, with this decrease being primarily driven by:

- Teachers (falling from 82% to 59%)
- Those in Management roles (falling from 46% to 33%)

'Why did you provide a high rating of SQA's credibility?'

Figure 2: Reasons for Providing High Rating of SQA's Credibility (Unprompted)
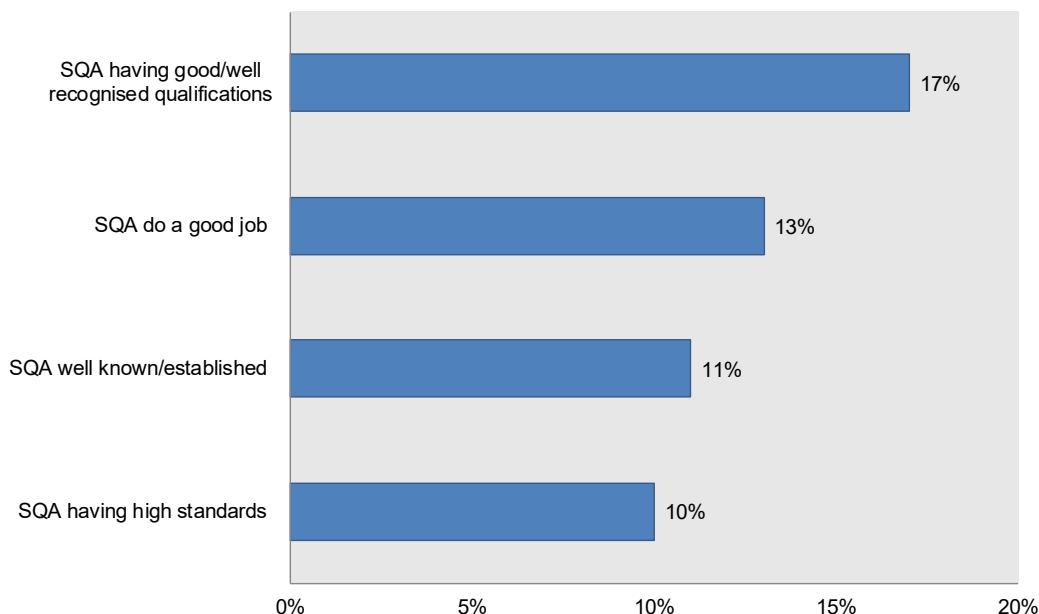
Base: Fairly High or Very High in Figure 1

When those stating their belief that SQA had **high** credibility were asked (on an unprompted basis) why this was the case, their **primary responses** focused around beliefs that SQA:

- Has good and well-recognised qualifications (17%)
- 'Does a good job' (13%)
- Is well known and well established (11%)
- Has high standards (10%)

Further examination of the data in November/December 2023 indicated that the reasons noted above were **most commonly** cited by the following audiences[1]:

- **SQA having good and well-recognised qualifications**: those in Management roles and Teachers (32% and 26% respectively)
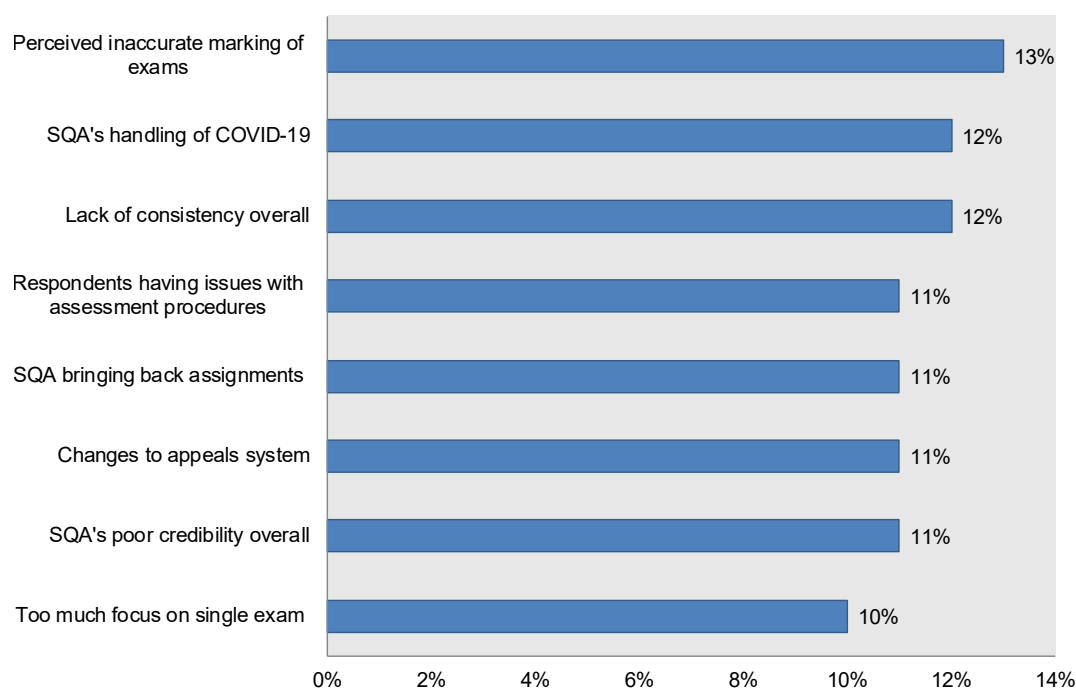
---

[1] The comparisons drawn here for Learners are largely indicative in nature

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

- **SQA doing a good job**: Learners and Parents/Carers (25% and 20% respectively)
- **SQA being well known and established**: those in Management roles and Teachers (22% and 14% respectively)
- **SQA having high standards**: Teachers and those in Management roles (18% and 15% respectively)

In addition, it should be noted that those in Management roles were most likely to state their belief that SQA is efficient and/or competent (12% compared to, for example, 3% for Parents/Carers and 2% for Learners).

'Why did you provide a low rating of SQA's credibility?'

Figure 3: Reasons for Providing Low Rating of SQA's Credibility (Unprompted)

Perceived inaccurate marking of exams	13%
SQA's handling of COVID-19	12%
Lack of consistency overall	12%
Respondents having issues with assessment procedures	11%
SQA bringing back assignments	11%
Changes to appeals system	11%
SQA's poor credibility overall	11%
Too much focus on single exam	10%

Base: Fairly Low or Very Low in Figure 1

When those stating their belief that SQA had **low** credibility were asked – again, on an unprompted basis – why they believed this to be the case, a number of reasons were cited, including:

- Perceived inaccurate marking of exams (13%)
- SQA's handling of COVID-19 (12%)
- Lack of consistency within SQA overall (12%)
- Respondents having issues with SQA's assessment procedures (11%)
- SQA bringing back assignments (11%)
- Changes to the appeals system (11%)
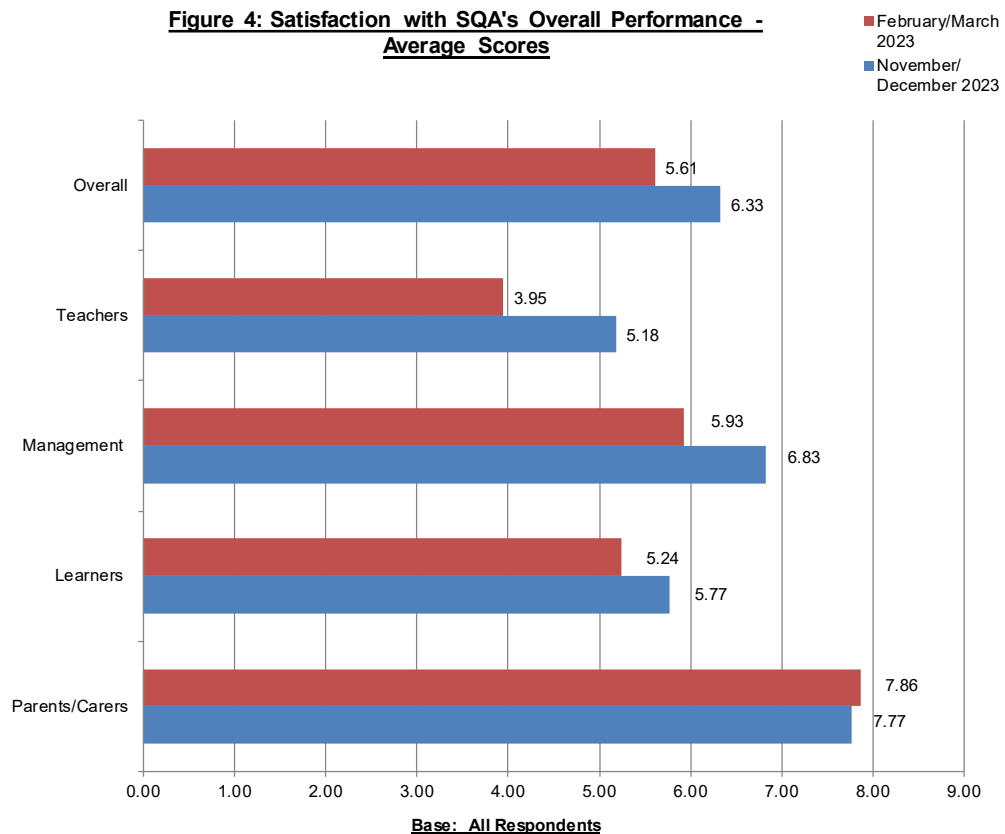- SQA having poor credibility generally (11%)

Further examination of the data for November/December 2023 indicated that the reasons noted above – and others – were **most commonly** cited by the following audiences (where notable variances were apparent)[2]:

- **Inaccurate marking of exams**: Teachers and Learners (17% and 15% respectively)
- **SQA's handling of COVID-19**: Parents/Carers (24%)
- **Lack of consistency within SQA overall**: Teachers and those in Management roles (17% and 13% respectively)
- **Respondents having issues with SQA's assessment procedures**: those in Management roles and Teachers (17% and 14% respectively)
- **SQA bringing back assessments**: Teachers and those in Management roles (15% and 14% respectively)
- **Changes to the appeals system**: those in Management roles and Learners (both 16%)
- **Too much focus on a single exam**: Learners (18%)
- **Too many changes**: Teachers and those in Management roles (12% and 10% respectively)

---

[2] The comparisons drawn here for Learners and Parents/Carers are largely indicative in nature

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

2.2   Satisfaction with SQA's Overall Performance

'How satisfied would you say you are with the performance of SQA overall, on a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' means 'completely dissatisfied' and '10' means 'completely satisfied'?'

Figure 4: Satisfaction with SQA's Overall Performance - Average Scores

Legend: February/March 2023; November/December 2023

Base: All Respondents

Category	February/March 2023	November/December 2023
Overall	5.61	6.33
Teachers	3.95	5.18
Management	5.93	6.83
Learners	5.24	5.77
Parents/Carers	7.86	7.77

Respondents in November/December 2023 provided an average score of 6.33 out of a possible 10 in terms of their satisfaction with SQA's performance overall, with the average score here being highest amongst Parents/Carers and lowest amongst Teachers, ie:

- Parents/Carers (7.77 out of a possible 10)
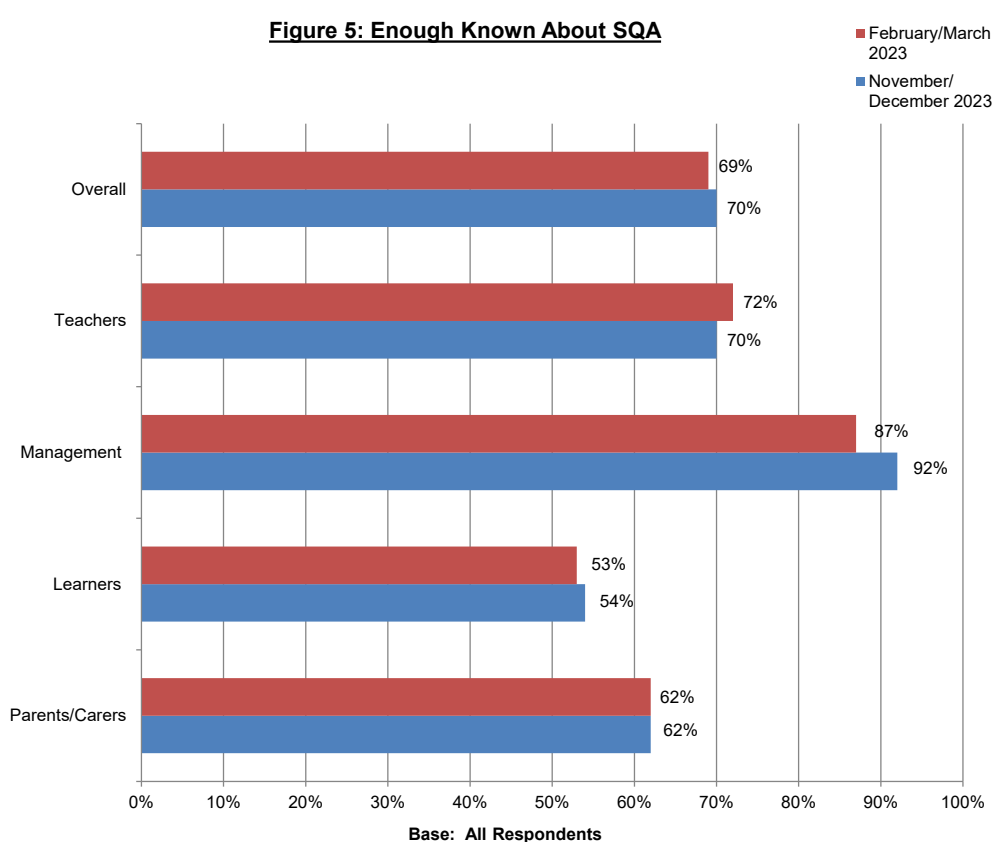- Those in Management roles (6.83)
- Learners (5.77)
- Teachers (5.18)

Since the last survey, there was a notable increase in overall satisfaction score (from 5.61 to 6.33), with this increase being

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

primarily driven by Teachers and, thereafter, those in Management roles and Learners:

- Teachers (rising from 3.95 to 5.18)
- Those in Management roles (rising from 5.93 to 6.83)
- Learners (rising from 5.24 to 5.77)

2.3   SQA Knowledge and Information Profile

'Do you believe you know enough about SQA?'

Figure 5: Enough Known About SQA

From Figure 5, it can be seen that, overall, seven out of ten respondents in November/December 2023 (70%) stated their belief that they knew enough about SQA, with this outcome being highest amongst those in Management roles and lowest amongst Learners, ie:

- Those in Management roles (92%)
- Teachers (70%)
- Parents/Carers (62%)

- Learners (54%)

Figure 5 also indicates that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was virtually no change in the extent to which respondents believed they knew enough about SQA (rising by only 1%). Indeed, the only notable difference to emerge here was that, during that time, there was an increasing extent to which those in Management roles believed they knew enough about SQA (rising from 87% to 92%).

'What would you like to know more about SQA?'

Figure 6: Information Desires re SQA (Unprompted)
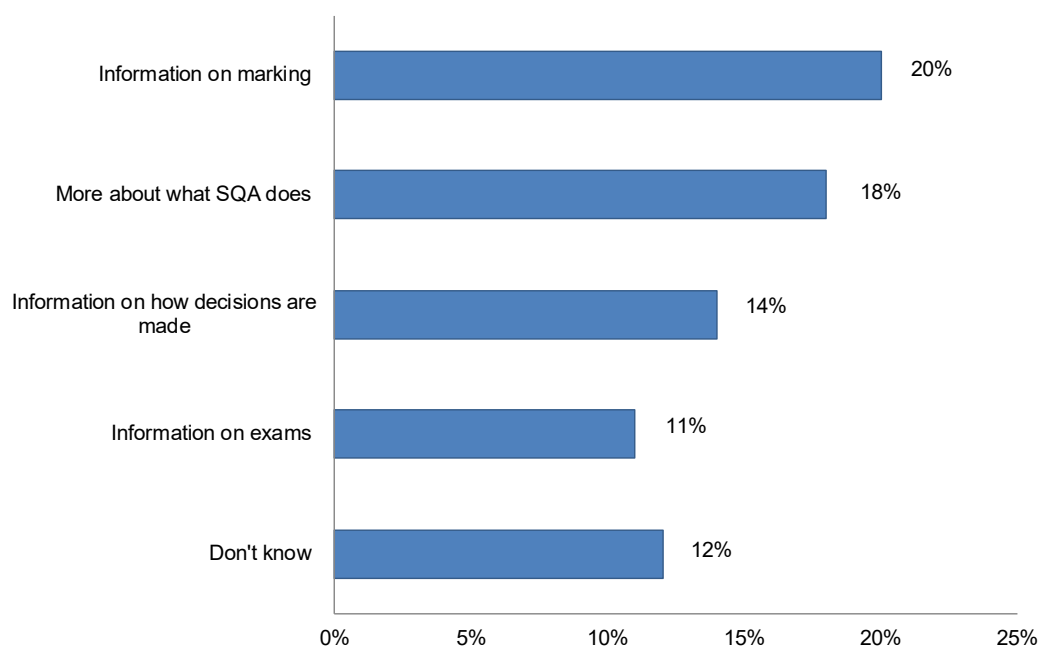
Base: Respondents not Knowing Enough About SQA

When those who did not believe that they knew enough about SQA in November/December 2023 were asked – on an unprompted basis – what they would like to know more about SQA, their **primary responses** were those of:

- More information on marking (20%)
- More about what SQA does (18%)

Thereafter, **secondary unprompted mention** was made here of a desire for more information regarding:

- How decisions are made by SQA (14%)
- Exams (11%)

It should also be noted that one in six respondents here in November/December 2023 (12%) stated that they 'didn't know' what they would like to know more about SQA.

Further examination of the data indicated that the responses noted in Figure 6 were **most commonly** cited by the following audiences[3]:

- **More about what SQA does**: Parents/Carers and Learners (38% and 12% respectively)
- **Information on marking**: Teachers, those in Management roles and Learners (36%, 27% and 26% respectively)
- **Information on exams**: Teachers and Learners (20% and 15% respectively)
- **Information on how decisions are made**: those in Management roles and Teachers (40% and 27% respectively)

In addition, it should be noted that Parents/Carers here were most likely to state that they 'didn't know' what they would like to know more about SQA (24%).

---

[3] The variances on the basis of audience type here are largely indicative in nature

3.0   SQA QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE

3.1   Qualification Knowledge and Credibility

'Do you think you know enough about SQA qualifications of which you are aware?'

Table 1: Enough Known About Qualifications of Which Respondents Are Aware

	Overall		Teachers		Management		Learners		Parents/Carers	
	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023
Highers	76%	89%	93%	86%	97%	94%	86%	86%	96%	87%
Advanced Highers	72%	72%	72%	67%	85%	86%	60%	60%	82%	72%
National 1s	38%	48%	15%	24%	26%	43%	50%	55%	74%	63%
National 2s	48%	47%	20%	26%	29%	44%	50%	54%	74%	59%
National 3s	70%	65%	67%	65%	72%	71%	61%	58%	77%	63%
National 4s	92%	81%	88%	86%	93%	89%	79%	81%	91%	70%
National 5s	95%	89%	96%	90%	97%	95%	96%	97%	92%	76%
HNCs/HNDs	49%	49%	17%	27%	24%	35%	40%	33%	85%	80%
PDAs	43%	44%	25%	38%	29%	40%	36%	24%	65%	59%
SVQs	38%	46%	17%	24%	24%	35%	15%	16%	81%	77%

From Table 1, it can be seen that **greatest beliefs** amongst respondents in November/December 2023 that they know enough about qualifications of which they were aware relate to:

- Highers (89%)
- National 5s (89%)
- National 4s (81%)
- Advanced Highers (72%)
- National 3s (65%)

In contrast, respondents in November/December 2023 were **least likely** to state that they know enough about a number of qualifications of which they were aware, including:

- HNCs/HNDs (49%)
- National 1s (48%)
- National 2s (47%)
- SVQs (46%)
- PDAs (44%)

Further examination of the data indicated a number of variances here in terms of beliefs that enough is known about qualifications of which respondents were aware, including **greatest beliefs** that enough is known about the following qualifications by the audiences noted below:

- **Advanced Highers**: those in Management roles (86%)
- **National 1s**: Parents/Carers and Learners (63% and 55% respectively)
- **National 2s**: Parents/Carers and Learners (59% and 54% respectively)
- **National 3s**: those in Management roles (71%)
- **National 4s**: those in Management roles, Teachers and Learners (89%, 86% and 81% respectively)

- **National 5s**: Learners, those in Management roles and Teachers (97%, 95% and 90% respectively)
- **HNCs/HNDs**: Parents/Carers (80%)
- **PDAs**: Parents/Carers (59%)
- **SVQs**: Parents/Carers (77%)

Further examination of the data also indicated that, overall, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there were **increases** in the extent to which those aware of a number of qualifications believed they knew enough about them, namely:

- Highers (rising from 76% to 89%)
- National 1s (rising from 38% to 48%)
- SVQs (rising from 38% to 46%)

In contrast, during that time, there were **deceases** apparent here in relation to:

- National 3s (falling from 70% to 65%)
- National 4s (falling from 92% to 81%)
- National 5s (falling from 95% to 89%)

'How would you rate the credibility of qualifications of which you are aware?'

Table 2: Perceived High Credibility of Qualifications of Which Respondents Are Aware

	Overall		Teachers		Management		Learners		Parents/Carers	
	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023
Highers	85%	92%	81%	85%	90%	99%	85%	83%	100%	97%
Advanced Highers	86%	91%	84%	88%	87%	99%	83%	84%	100%	92%
National 1s	18%	49%	5%	38%	19%	50%	30%	45%	17%	59%
National 2s	33%	42%	6%	37%	18%	49%	30%	45%	48%	39%
National 3s	30%	43%	6%	26%	17%	46%	30%	46%	64%	53%
National 4s	25%	49%	8%	27%	24%	49%	46%	52%	91%	74%
National 5s	72%	79%	61%	69%	79%	90%	76%	75%	91%	79%
HNCs/HNDs	82%	91%	70%	81%	86%	90%	77%	75%	100%	97%
PDAs	55%	77%	35%	58%	45%	77%	72%	54%	91%	89%
SVQs	56%	87%	45%	69%	51%	95%	56%	61%	93%	92%

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

From Table 2, it can be seen that **greatest levels** of perceived **high credibility** of qualifications of which respondents in November/ December 2023 were aware related to:

- Highers (92%)
- Advanced Highers (91%)
- HNCs/HNDs (91%)
- SVQs (87%)

In contrast, **lowest levels** of perceived **high credibility** of qualifications of which respondents in November/December 2023 were aware related to:

- National 1s (49%)
- National 4s (49%)
- National 3s (43%)
- National 2s (42%)

Further examination of the data indicated that, in November/December 2023, there were variances between audiences in terms of the increased perceived high credibility of qualifications of which they were aware, including the audiences noted below being most likely to believe the following qualifications to have high credibility:

- **Highers**: those in Management roles and Parents/Carers (99% and 97% respectively)
- **Advanced Highers**: those in Management roles and Parents/Carers (99% and 92% respectively)
- **National 1s**: Parents/Carers, those in Management roles and Learners (59%, 50% and 45% respectively)
- **National 2s**: those in Management roles and Learners (49% and 45% respectively)

- **National 3s**: Parents/Carers, those in Management roles and Learners (53%, 46% and 46% respectively)
- **National 4s**: Parents/Carers (74%)
- **National 5s**: those in Management roles (90%)
- **HNCs/HNDs**: Parents/Carers (97%)
- **PDAs**: Parents/Carers (89%)
- **SVQs**: those in Management roles and Parents/Carers (95% and 92% respectively)
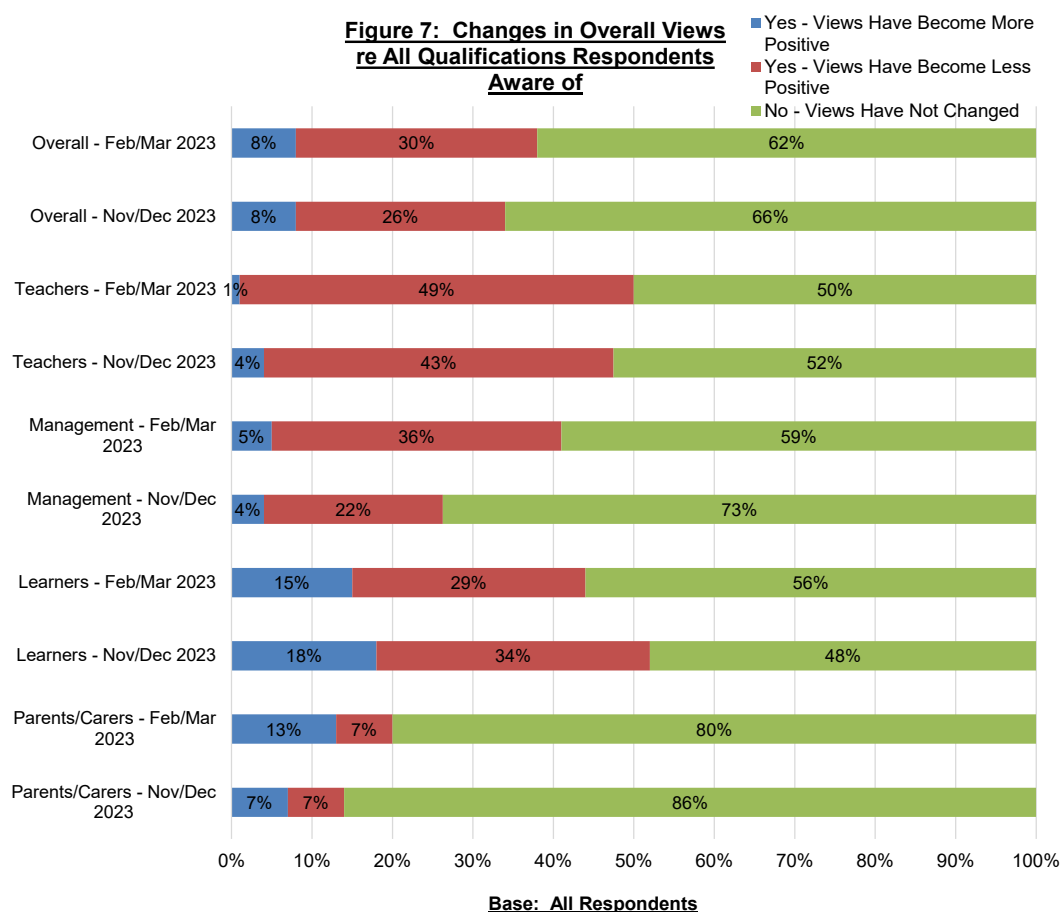
Further examination of the data also indicated that, for all of the qualifications under consideration, there was **increased perceived high credibility** since the last survey amongst those who were aware of them, ie:

- **Highers**: (rising from 85% to 92%), with this being primarily driven by those in Management roles (rising from 90% to 99%)
- **Advanced Highers**: (rising from 86% to 91%), with this being primarily driven by those in Management roles (rising from 87% to 99%)
- **National 1s**: (rising from 18% to 49%), with this being driven by all four audiences
- **National 2s**: (rising from 33% to 42%), with this being primarily driven by Teachers (rising from 6% to 37%) and those in Management roles (rising from 18% to 49%)
- **National 3s**: (rising from 30% to 43%), with this being primarily driven by Teachers (rising from 6% to 26%) and those in Management roles (rising from 17% to 46%)
- **National 4s**: (rising from 25% to 49%), with this being primarily driven by Teachers (rising from 8% to 27%) and those in Management roles (rising from 24% to 49%)
- **National 5s**: (rising from 72% to 79%), with this being primarily driven by Teachers (rising from 61% to 69%) and those in Management roles (rising from 79% to 90%)

- **HNCs/HNDs**: (rising from 82% to 91%), with this being primarily driven by Teachers (rising from 70% to 81%)

- **PDAs**: (rising from 55% to 77%), with this being primarily driven by Teachers (rising from 35% to 58%) and those in Management roles (rising from 45% to 77%)

- **SVQs**: (rising from 56% to 87%), with this being primarily driven by Teachers (rising from 45% to 69%) and those in Management roles (rising from 51% to 95%)

3.2   Changes in Views About Qualifications

*'Have your overall views on the credibility of **all** of the qualifications you have heard of taken together changed over the last year?'*

Figure 7: Changes in Overall Views re All Qualifications Respondents Aware of

Legend:
- Yes - Views Have Become More Positive
- Yes - Views Have Become Less Positive
- No - Views Have Not Changed

	More Positive	Less Positive	Not Changed
Overall - Feb/Mar 2023	8%	30%	62%
Overall - Nov/Dec 2023	8%	26%	66%
Teachers - Feb/Mar 2023	1%	49%	50%
Teachers - Nov/Dec 2023	4%	43%	52%
Management - Feb/Mar 2023	5%	36%	59%
Management - Nov/Dec 2023	4%	22%	73%
Learners - Feb/Mar 2023	15%	29%	56%
Learners - Nov/Dec 2023	18%	34%	48%
Parents/Carers - Feb/Mar 2023	13%	7%	80%
Parents/Carers - Nov/Dec 2023	7%	7%	86%

Base: All Respondents

From Figure 7, it can be seen that, in November/December 2023, two thirds of respondents (66%) stated that their overall views on the credibility of **all** of the qualifications they had heard of taken together had **not changed** over the last year.

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

Thereafter, a quarter of respondents in November/December 2023 (26%) stated that their views had changed and become **less positive**, whilst one in twelve (8%) stated that their views had changed and become **more positive**.

Further examination of the data for November/December 2023 indicated the following:

- **Learners** were most likely to state that their views had changed and become **more positive** (18%)
- **Teachers, Learners** and, thereafter, **those in Management roles** were most likely to state that their views had changed and become **less positive** (43%, 34% and 22% respectively)
- **Parents/Carers** and **those in Management roles** were most likely to state that their views had **not changed** (86% and 73% respectively)

Figure 7 also indicates that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was a notable increase in the extent to which, overall, respondents stated that their views had not changed over the last year (rising from 62% to 66%), with this change being **primarily** driven by those in Management roles (rising from 59% to 73%).

In addition, Figure 7 indicates that, since the last survey, there was a notable decrease in the extent to which, overall, respondents stated that their views had changed and become less positive (falling from 30% to 26%), with this fall being **primarily** driven by those in Management roles (falling from 36% to 22%).

'In what ways have your views on the overall credibility of these qualifications become less positive?'[4]

Figure 8: Ways In Which Views on the Overall Credibility of Qualifications Have Become Less Positive (Unprompted)
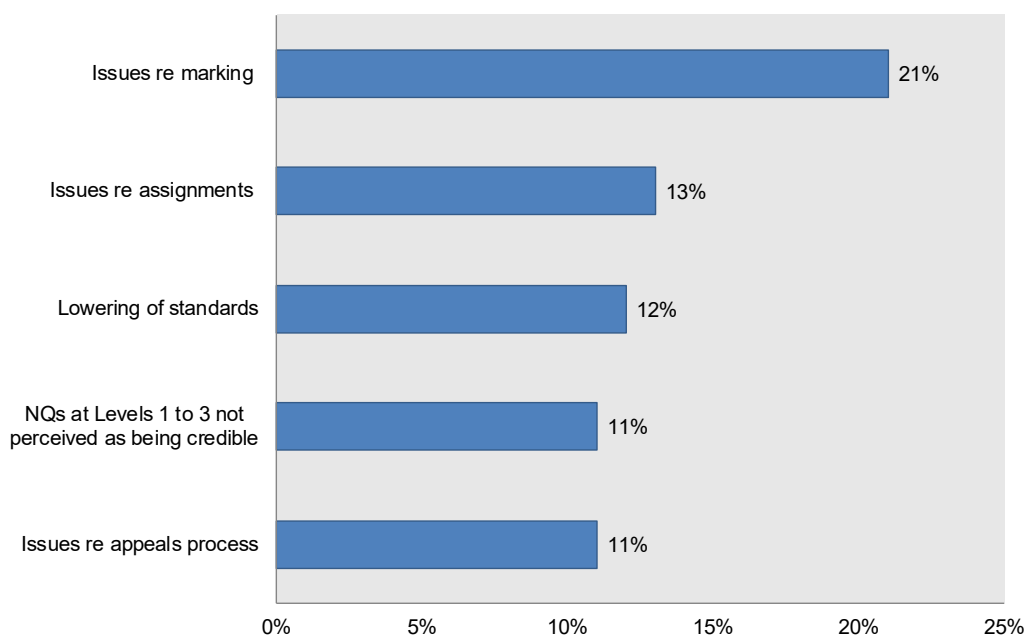
Base: Views Have Become Less Positive in Figure 7

Figure 8 indicates that, when those stating that their views had changed and become **less positive** were asked – on an unprompted basis – why this was the case, their **primary response** focused around them having issues relating to marking (21%).

Thereafter, **some mention** was made of a range of other unprompted reasons here, namely:

- Issues relating to assignments (13%)
- Lowering of standards in qualifications (12%)
- National Qualifications at Levels 1 to 3 not being perceived as being credible (11%)
- Issues relating to the appeals process (11%)

---

[4] Respondents stating that their views had changed and had become more positive were also asked in what ways this had been the case. However, the subsample of respondents here is insufficient to allow meaningful outcomes to be reported

It should be noted that the subsample of respondents here is insufficient to allow a breakdown of findings on the basis of audience type.

4.0   SQA CONTACT AND COMMUNICATIONS PROFILE

4.1   Contact Profile

'Have you had contact from SQA or have you contacted SQA?'

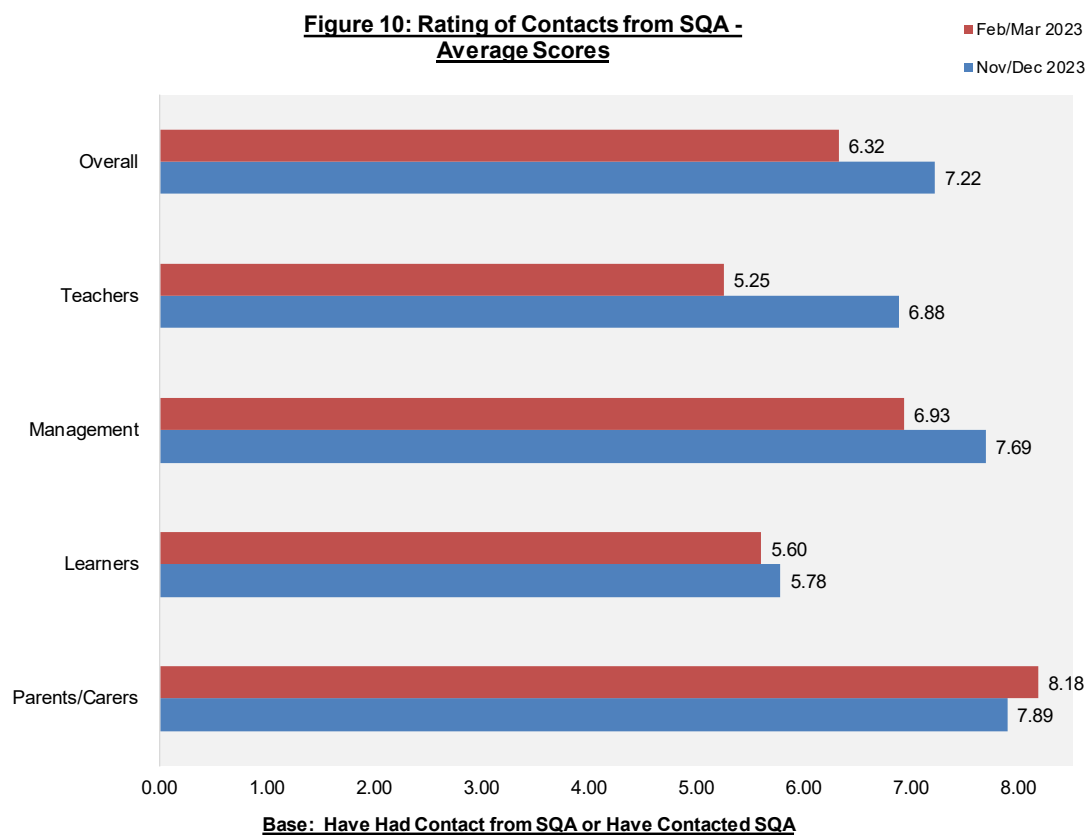**Figure 9: Had Contact from SQA or Have Contacted SQA**
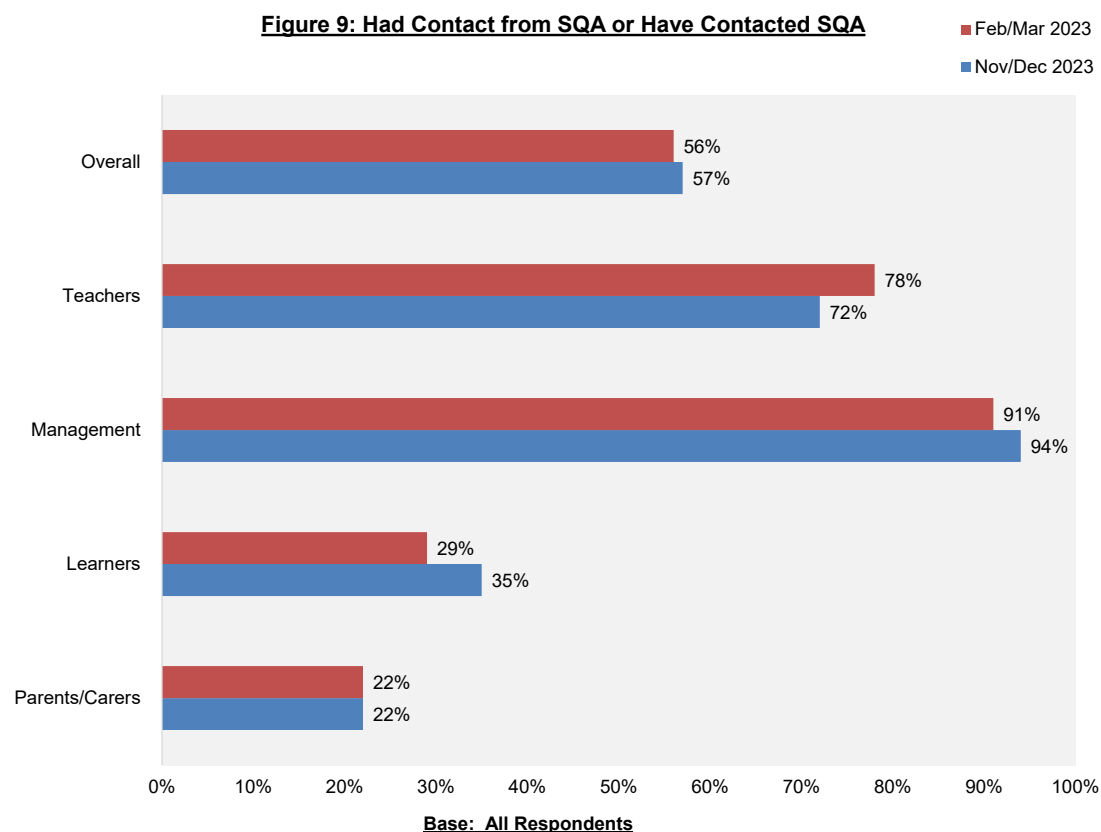
From Figure 9, it can be seen that approaching three out of five respondents in November/December 2023 (57%) stated that they had had contact with SQA.

Figure 9 also indicates that **highest levels** of contact were most common amongst those in Management roles and, thereafter, Teachers, ie:

- Those in Management roles (94%)
- Teachers (72%)
- Learners (35%)
- Parents/Carers (22%)

It can also be seen from Figure 9 that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was very minimal change in terms of levels of contact (rising from 56% to 57%), although, during that time, levels of contact decreased notably amongst Teachers (falling from 78% to 72%) and increased amongst Learners (rising from 29% to 35%).

'Overall, how would you rate your contact with SQA on a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' is 'very poor' and '10' is 'very good'?'

Figure 10: Rating of Contacts from SQA - Average Scores

■ Feb/Mar 2023
■ Nov/Dec 2023

	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023
Overall	6.32	7.22
Teachers	5.25	6.88
Management	6.93	7.69
Learners	5.60	5.78
Parents/Carers	8.18	7.89

Base: Have Had Contact from SQA or Have Contacted SQA

When respondents in November/December 2023 were asked how they rated their contact from SQA, Figure 10 indicates that an average score of 7.22 out of a possible 10 was noted. This compares to an average score of 6.32 in February/March 2023, with increases in average scores being most apparent amongst Teachers and those in Management roles, ie:

- Teachers (rising from 5.25 to 6.88)
- Those in Management roles (rising from 6.93 to 7.69)

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

Figure 10 also indicates that, in November/December 2023, the average scores noted were **highest** amongst Parents/Carers (7.89) and lowest amongst Learners (5.78), ie:

- Parents/Carers (7.89)
- Those in Management roles (7.69)
- Teachers (6.88)
- Learners (5.78)

'Why did you choose this rating number?'

**Figure 11: Reasons for Providing Positive Rating of SQA Contacts
(Unprompted)**

Base: Provided Rating of 6 to 10
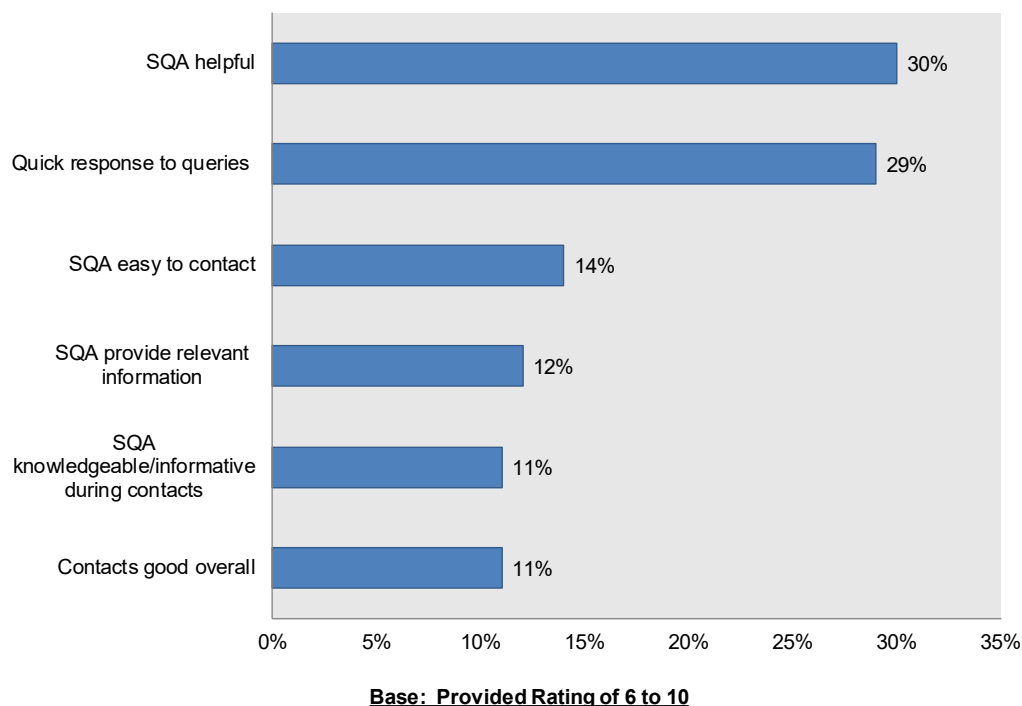
When those who provided a positive rating of SQA in terms of their contacts with it (ie those who provided a rating of between 6 and 10) were asked – on an unprompted basis – why they provided such a rating, Figure 11 indicates that the **most prominent reasons** cited were those of:

- SQA being helpful during contacts (30%)
- SQA being quick to respond to queries (29%)

Thereafter, **secondary unprompted mention** was made here of:

- SQA being easy to contact (14%)
- SQA providing relevant information during contacts (12%)
- SQA being knowledgeable and/or informative during contacts (11%)
- Overall, SQA's contacts being good (11%)

It should be noted that the subsample of respondents here is insufficient to allow a meaningful breakdown to be provided on the basis of audience type, although **indicatively**, it should also be noted that the audiences indicated below were most likely to provide the following responses:

- **SQA being helpful during contacts**: those in Management roles and Teachers (37% and 25% respectively)
- **SQA being quick to respond to queries**: those in Management roles (30%)
- **SQA being easy to contact**: those in Management roles and Teachers (19% and 14% respectively)
- **SQA providing relevant information during contacts**: Parents/ Carers (24%)
- **SQA being knowledgeable and/or informative during contacts**: those in Management roles and Teachers (14% and 13% respectively)
- **Overall, SQA's contacts being good**: Learners (22%)

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

'Why did you choose this rating number?'

Figure 12: Reasons for Providing Negative Rating of SQA Contacts (Unprompted) - Indicative
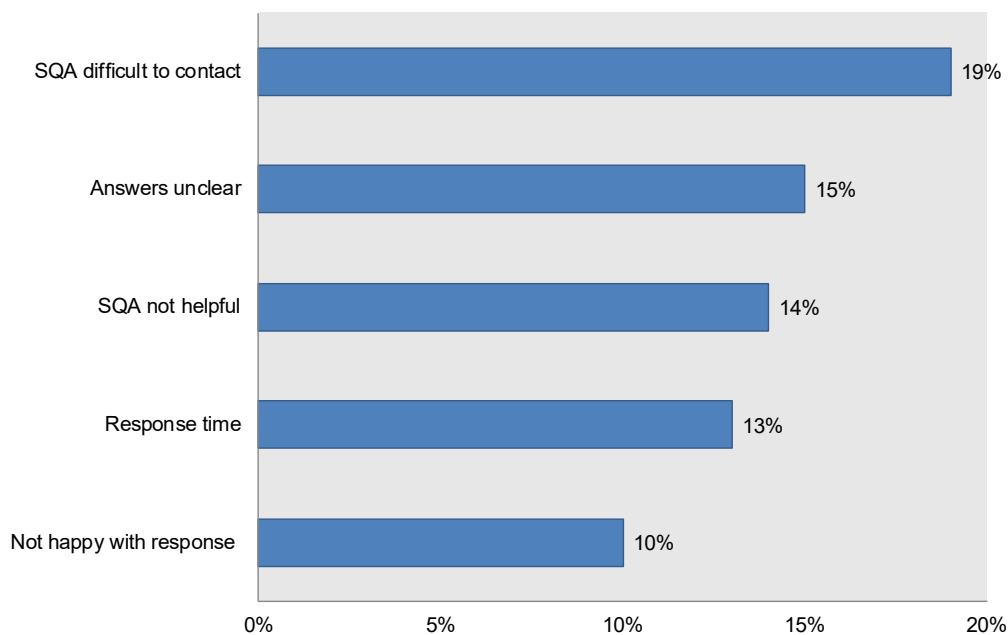
Base: Provided Rating of 1 to 5

The outcomes noted in Figure 12 are **indicative** in nature but, nonetheless, it is worthy of note that a number of reasons were cited for those who provided a rating of 1 to 5 (ie a negative rating) of their SQA contacts, namely:
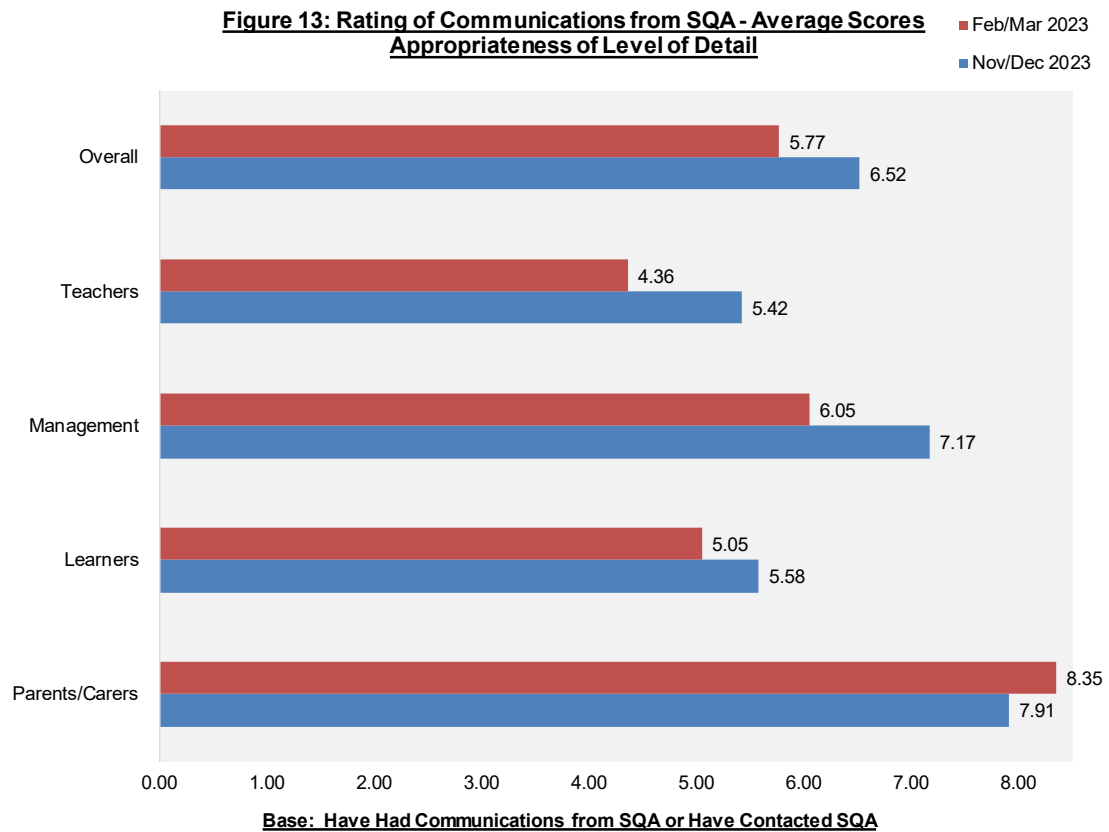
- SQA being difficult to contact (19%)
- Answers provided during contacts being unclear (15%)
- SQA not being helpful during contacts (14%)
- Time taken for SQA to respond (13%)
- Respondents not being happy with their response to their contact with SQA (10%)

It should be noted that the subsample of respondents here is insufficient to allow a meaningful breakdown of findings to be provided on the basis of audience type.

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

4.2   Communications Profile

4.2.1   Rating of Communications[5]

'How would you rate the following aspects of communications from SQA on a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' is 'very poor' and '10' is 'very good'?'

Figure 13: Rating of Communications from SQA - Average Scores Appropriateness of Level of Detail

Legend: ■ Feb/Mar 2023 ■ Nov/Dec 2023

Category	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023
Overall	5.77	6.52
Teachers	4.36	5.42
Management	6.05	7.17
Learners	5.05	5.58
Parents/Carers	8.35	7.91

Base: Have Had Communications from SQA or Have Contacted SQA

---

[5] The outcomes noted in Section 4.2.1 of this report exclude those unable to express an opinion and, in particular, those who had not engaged in communications with SQA

**Figure 14: Rating of Communications from SQA - Average Scores
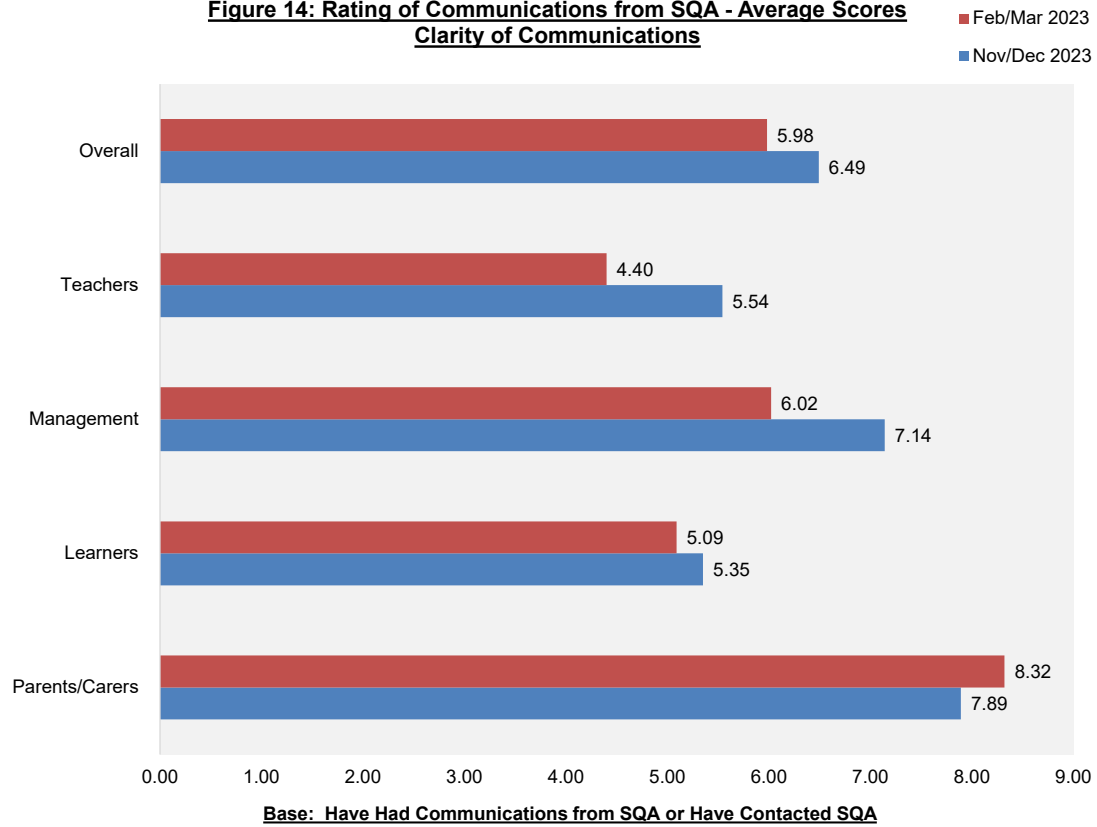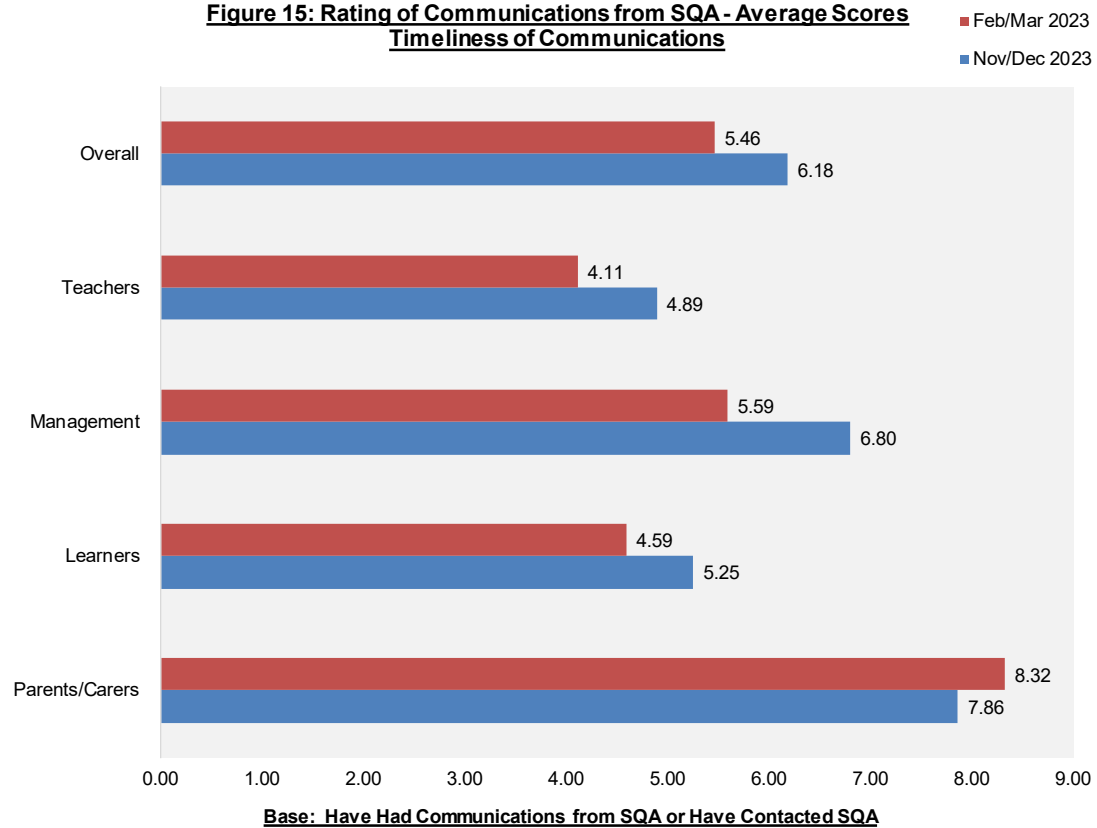Clarity of Communications**

■ Feb/Mar 2023
■ Nov/Dec 2023

Category	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023
Overall	5.98	6.49
Teachers	4.40	5.54
Management	6.02	7.14
Learners	5.09	5.35
Parents/Carers	8.32	7.89

Base: Have Had Communications from SQA or Have Contacted SQA

**Figure 15: Rating of Communications from SQA - Average Scores
Timeliness of Communications**

■ Feb/Mar 2023
■ Nov/Dec 2023

Category	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023
Overall	5.46	6.18
Teachers	4.11	4.89
Management	5.59	6.80
Learners	4.59	5.25
Parents/Carers	8.32	7.86

Base: Have Had Communications from SQA or Have Contacted SQA

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

As can be seen from Figures 13 to 15, respondents in November/ December 2023 provided the following average scores (out of a possible 10) for three aspects of their communications from SQA:

- How appropriate the level of detail was (6.52)
- Clarity of communications (6.49)
- Timeliness of communications (6.18)

Figures 13 to 15 also indicate that the responses of the four audience types varied on the following basis:

- How appropriate the level of detail was (ranging from 5.42 and 5.58 respectively for Teachers and Learners to 7.17 and 7.91 respectively for those in Management roles and Parents/Carers)
- Clarity of communications (ranging from 5.35 and 5.54 respectively for Learners and Teachers to 7.14 and 7.89 respectively for those in Management roles and Parents/Carers)
- Timeliness of communications (ranging from 4.89 and 5.25 respectively for Teachers and Learners compared to 6.80 and 7.86 respectively for those in Management roles and Parents/Carers)
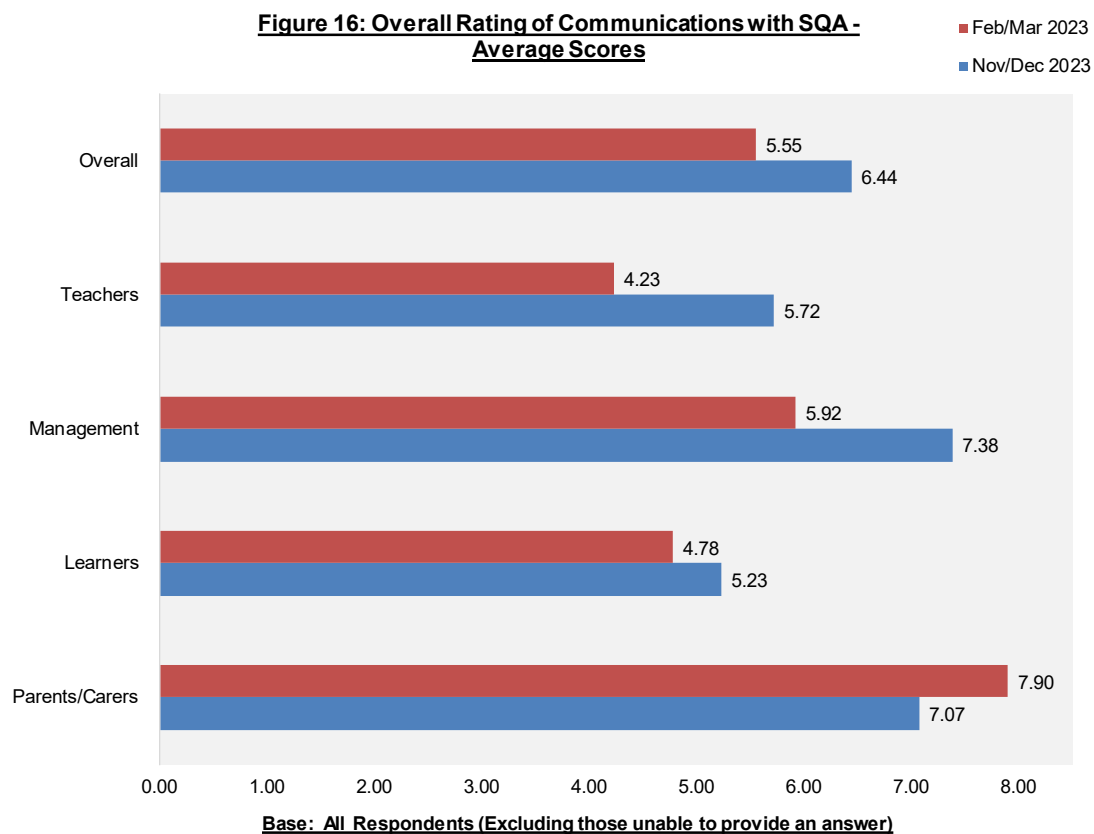
Figures 13 to 15 also indicate that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was an improvement in the overall average score for each of the three indicators, ie:

- **How appropriate the level of detail was** (rising from 5.77 to 6.52), with this increase being driven by Teachers (rising from 4.36 to 5.42), those in Management roles (rising from 6.05 to 7.17) and Learners (rising from 5.05 to 5.58). It should also be noted that, during that time, there was a decrease in the average score noted by Parents/Carers (falling from 8.35 to 7.91)
- **Clarity of communications** (rising from 5.78 to 6.49), with this increase being driven by Teachers (rising from 4.40 to 5.54), those in Management roles (rising from 6.02 to 7.14) and, to a lesser

extent, Learners (rising from 5.09 to 5.35). Again, it should be noted that, during that time, there was a fall in the average score noted by Parents/Carers (falling from 8.32 to 7.89)

- **Timeliness of communications** (rising from 5.46 to 6.18), with this increase being driven by Teachers (rising from 4.11 to 4.89), those in Management roles (rising from 5.59 to 6.80) and Learners (rising from 4.59 to 5.25). Once again, it should be noted that, during that time, there was a fall in the average score noted by Parents/Carers (falling from 8.32 to 7.86)

'Overall, how would you rate communications from SQA, on a scale from 1 to 10, where '1' is 'very poor' and '10' is 'very good'?'

Figure 16: Overall Rating of Communications with SQA - Average Scores

■ Feb/Mar 2023
■ Nov/Dec 2023

	Feb/Mar 2023	Nov/Dec 2023
Overall	5.55	6.44
Teachers	4.23	5.72
Management	5.92	7.38
Learners	4.78	5.23
Parents/Carers	7.90	7.07

Base: All Respondents (Excluding those unable to provide an answer)

From Figure 16, it can be seen that an average score of 6.44 out of a possible 10 was provided by respondents in November/December 2023 in terms of their overall rating of communications from SQA, with this outcome being **highest** amongst those in Management roles and Parents/Carers, ie:

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

- Those in Management roles (7.38)

- Parents/Carers (7.07)

- Teachers (5.72)

- Learners (5.23)

Further examination of the data also indicated that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was a notable increase in the overall rating of communications from SQA (rising from 5.55 to 6.44), with this rise being driven by Teachers (rising from 4.23 to 5.72), those in Management roles (rising from 5.92 to 7.38) and Learners (rising from 4.78 to 5.23).

It should also be noted that, during that time, there was a fall in the average score noted by Parents/Carers (falling from 7.90 to 7.07).

'Why did you choose this rating?'

Figure 17: Reasons for Choosing Good Rating of SQA Communications (Unprompted)
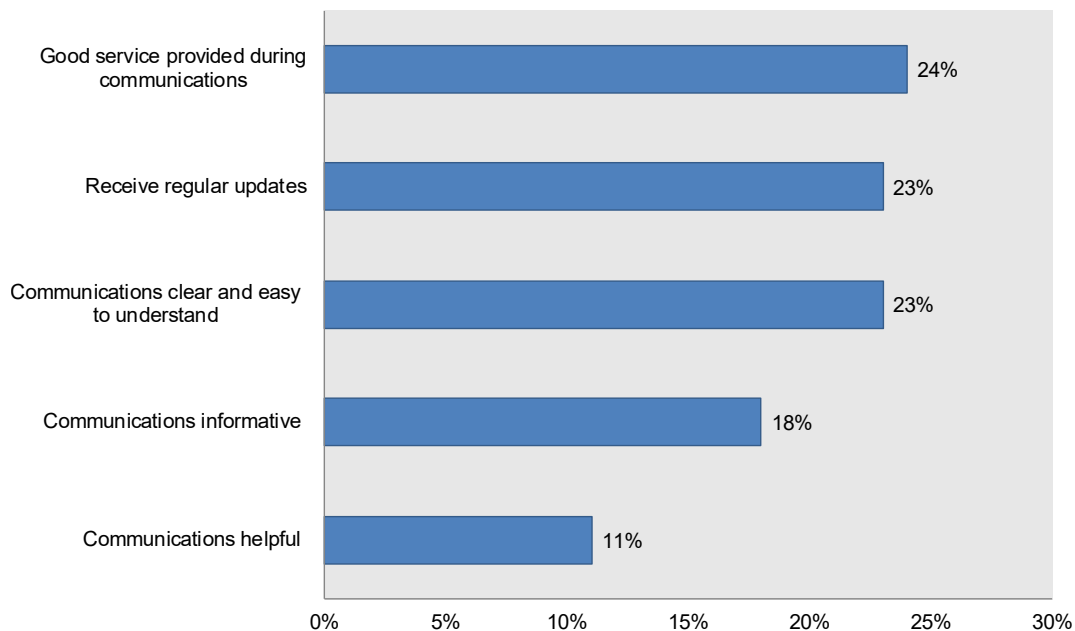
Base: Providing Rating of 6 to 10

When those providing a positive response for SQA in terms of their overall rating of its communications (ie those providing a rating of 6 to 10) were asked – on an unprompted basis – why this was the case, Figure 17 indicates that their **principal responses** focused around:

- SQA providing a good service during communications with them (24%)
- Receiving regular communication updates (23%)
- Communications being clear and easy to understand (23%)
- Communications being informative (18%)

Further examination of the data indicated that the reasons cited above were most commonly noted by the audiences indicated[6]:

- **SQA providing a good service during communications with them**: Teachers and those in Management roles (30% and 26% respectively)
- **Receiving regular communication updates**: those in Management roles and Teachers (39% and 19% respectively)
- **Communications being informative**: Learners (22%)

[6] The comparisons drawn here for Learners are largely indicative in nature

'Why did you choose a poor rating number?'

**Figure 18: Reasons for Choosing Poor Rating of SQA Communications
(Unprompted)**
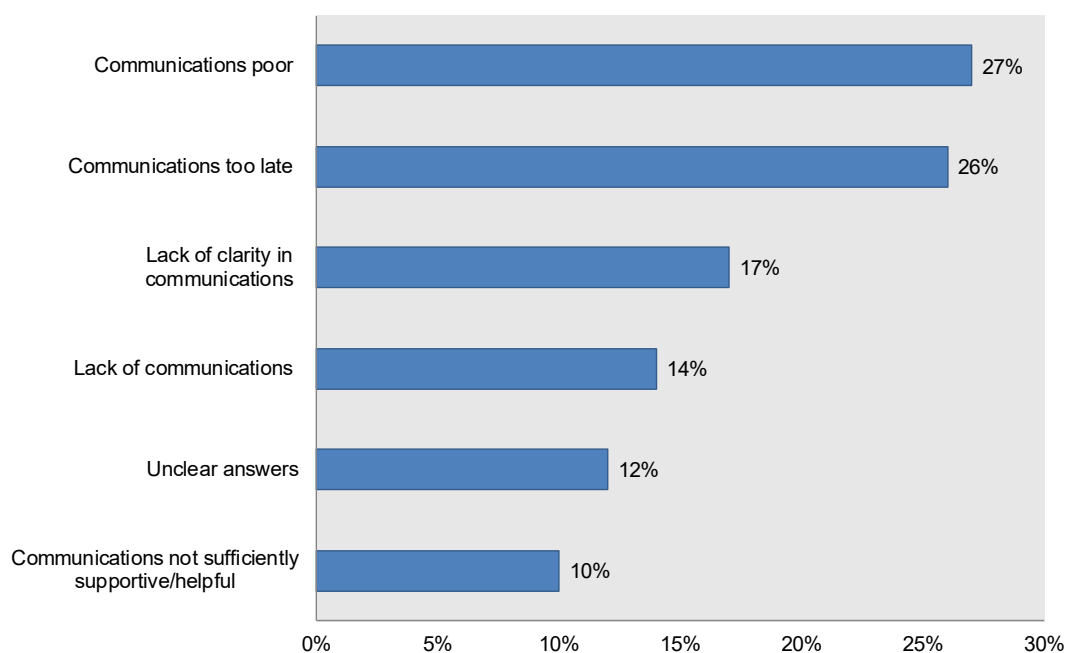
Base: Providing Rating of 1 to 5

The **primary reasons** cited – on an unprompted basis – for those providing a negative response (ie between 1 and 5) in terms of their communications focused around:

- Communications, in general, being poor (27%)
- Communications being late (26%)

Thereafter, **some unprompted mention** was made here of other reasons, including:

- Lack of clarity in communications (17%)
- Lack of communications (14%)
- Lack of clarity in answers provided during communications (12%)

It should be noted that the subsample of respondents here is insufficient to allow a meaningful breakdown of findings on the basis of audience type.

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

4.2.2 Other Communications Issues[7]

'What is your preferred communications channel?'

Figure 19: Preferred Communications Channels
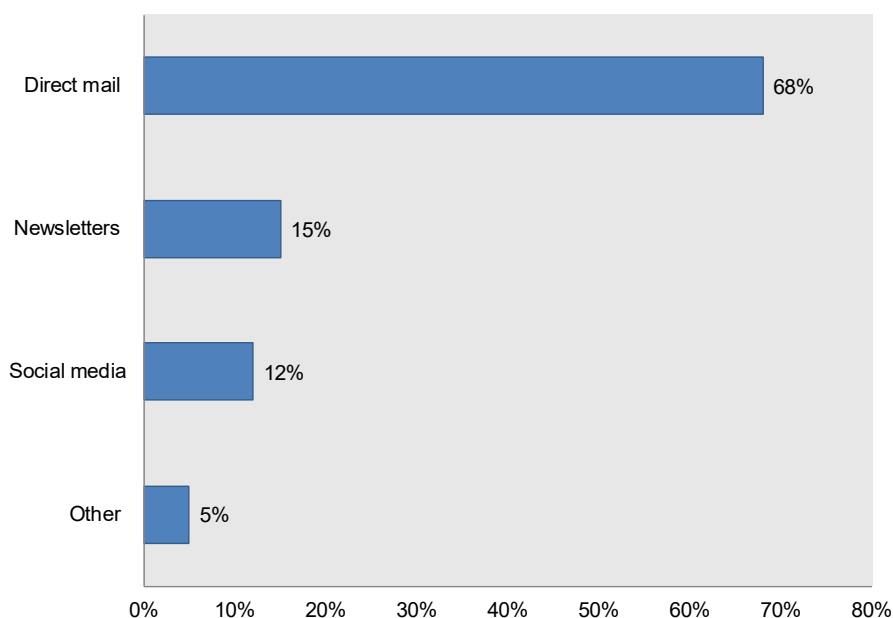
Base: All Respondents

When respondents in November/December 2023 were asked – on a prompted basis – to note their preferred communications channel, two thirds (68%) stated that this was 'direct mail'[8].

Thereafter, **some mention** was made here of preferences for:

- Newsletters (15%)
- The use of social media (12%)

Further examination of the data here indicated that the following audience types were most likely to note each of the preferred communications channels under consideration:

---

[7] The questions asked in Section 4.2.2 were asked for the first time in November/December 2023

[8] There is the potential that respondents have interpreted the term 'direct mail' to refer to 'emails'

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

- **Direct mail**: those in Management roles, Teachers and Parents/Carers (76%, 70% and 69% respectively)
- **Newsletters**: Teachers and those in Management roles (24% and 18% respectively)
- **Social media**: Learners (41%)

'To what extent do you agree with the statement that 'I understand the communications issued by SQA'?'

Figure 20: Understand the Communications Issued by SQA
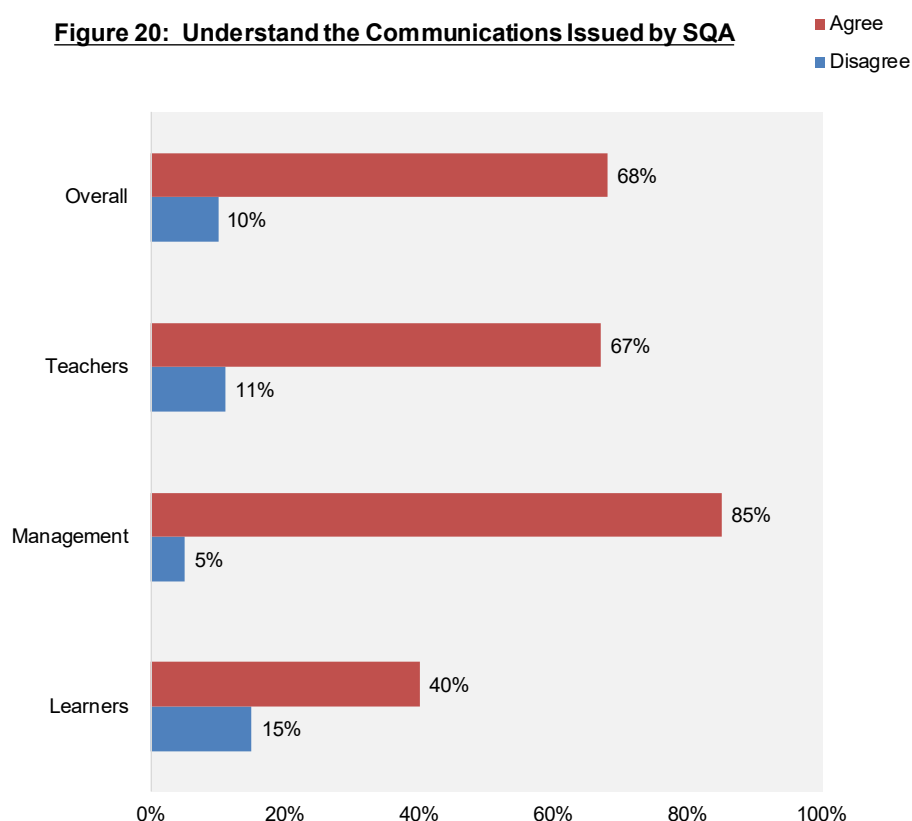
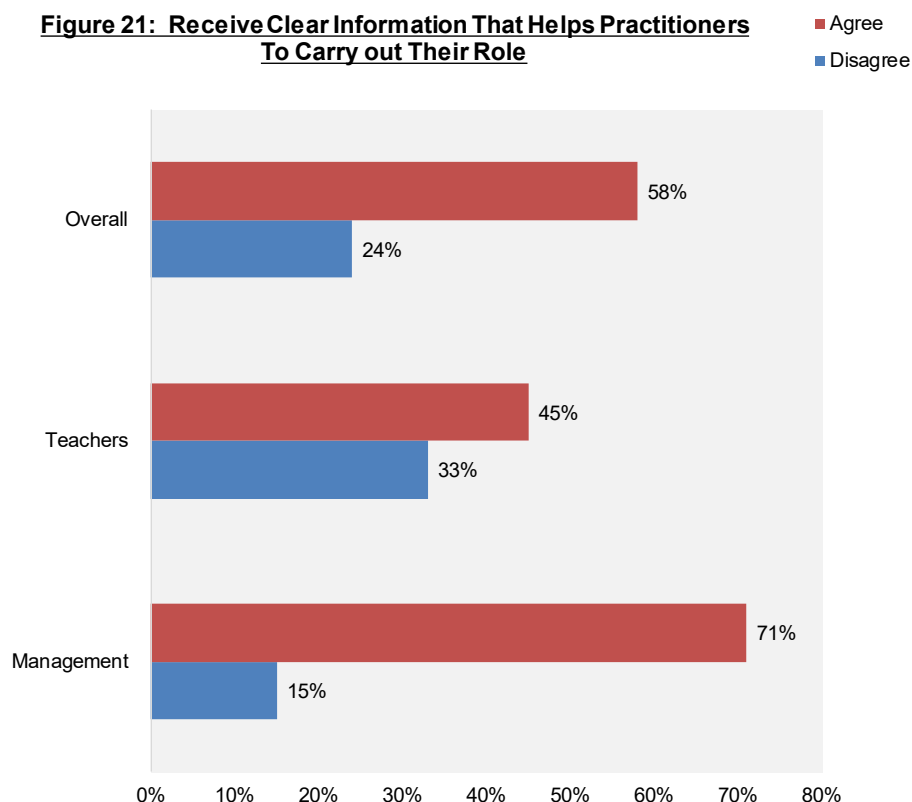**Base: Teachers, Management and School Learners**

From Figure 20, it can be seen that, overall, two thirds of Teachers, those in Management roles and Learners collectively (68%) stated that they understand the communications issued to them by SQA, with this outcome being most prominent amongst those in Management roles and least prominent amongst Learners, ie:

- Those in Management roles (85%)
- Teachers (67%)
- Learners (40%)

It should be noted that, overall, one in ten respondents (10%) disagreed that they understand the communications issued by SQA, with this being most prominent amongst Learners (15%) and least prominent amongst those in Management roles (5%).

'To what extent do you agree with the statement that 'I receive clear information from SQA that helps me carry out my role'?'

Figure 21: Receive Clear Information That Helps Practitioners To Carry out Their Role

■ Agree
■ Disagree

Overall: Agree 58%, Disagree 24%
Teachers: Agree 45%, Disagree 33%
Management: Agree 71%, Disagree 15%

Base: Teachers and Management

From Figure 21, it can be seen that, overall, approaching three out of five Teachers and those in Management roles collectively (58%) agreed that they receive clear information from SQA that helps them carry out their role, with this being far more likely to be the case amongst those in Management roles (71% compared to 45% for Teachers).

Figure 21 also indicates that, overall, a quarter of Teachers and those in Management roles collectively (24%) did **not** agree that they receive clear information that helps them to carry out their role, with this

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

outcome being far more likely amongst Teachers (33% compared to 15% for those in Management roles).

'Do you think the quantity of emails you receive from SQA is about right?'

Figure 22: Quantity of Emails Received from SQA by Teachers and Management

Base: Teachers and Management
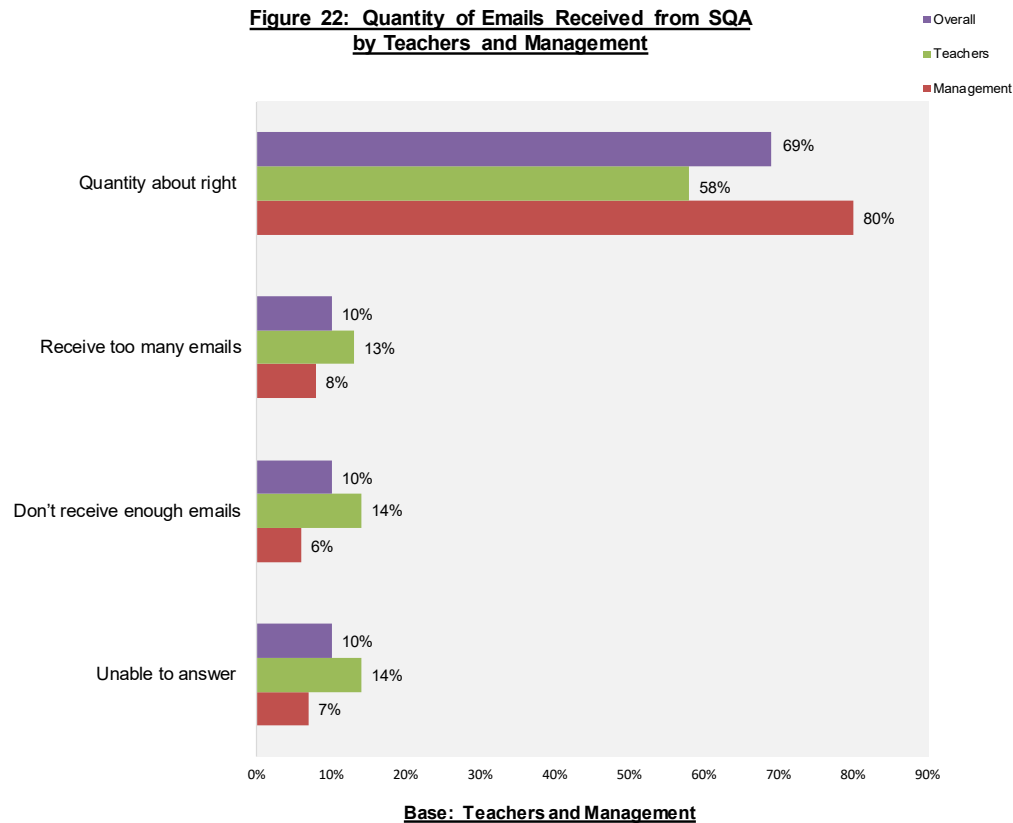
From Figure 22, it can be seen that seven out of ten Teachers and those in Management roles collectively (69%) believed that the quantity of emails they receive from SQA is 'about right', with this being far more likely amongst those in Management roles (80% compared to 58% for Teachers).

Figure 22 also indicates that one in ten respondents in Teaching and those in Management roles collectively (10%) stated that they 'receive too many emails', with this being most likely to be the case amongst Teachers (13% compared to 8% for those in Management roles).

Furthermore, Figure 22 indicates that, again, one in ten Teachers and those in Management roles collectively (10%) believed that they 'don't

receive enough emails', with this being most likely amongst Teachers (14% compared to 6% for those in Management roles).

Finally, Figure 22 indicates that, once again, overall, one in ten Teachers and those in Management roles collectively (10%) felt unable to provide an answer here, with this being most likely to be the case amongst Teachers (14% compared to 7% for those in Management roles).

'Do you think that the frequency of newsletters is right?'

Figure 23: Frequency of Newsletters Sent to Teachers and Management
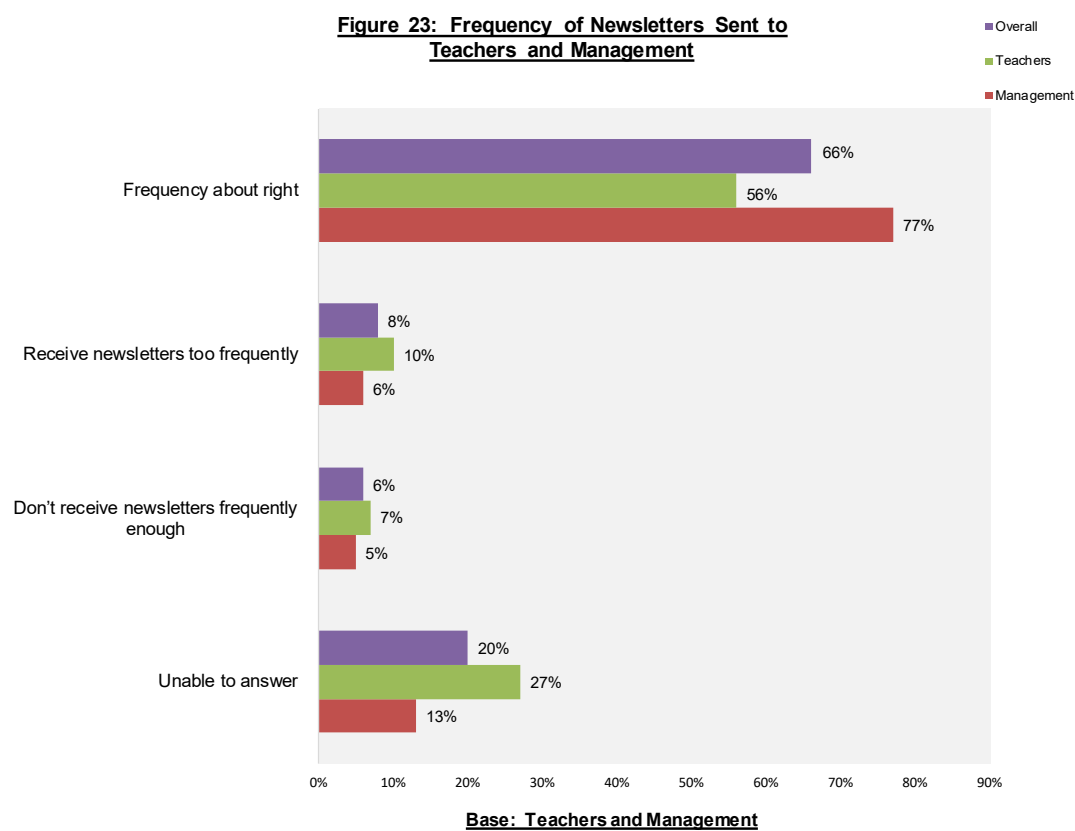
From Figure 23, it can be seen that, overall, two thirds of Teachers and those in Management roles collectively (66%) believed that the frequency of newsletters they receive from SQA is 'about right', with this outcome being far more prominent amongst those in Management roles (77% compared to 56% for Teachers).

Figure 23 also indicates that, overall, few Teachers and those in Management roles collectively believed that they receive newsletters 'too frequently' (8%) or 'don't receive newsletters frequently enough'

(6%), with these outcomes being broadly similar amongst Teachers and those in Management roles.

Finally, it can be seen from Figure 23 that, overall, one in five respondents here (20%) felt unable to express an opinion, with this being far more likely to be the case amongst Teachers (27% compared to 13% for those in those in Management roles).

'Do you think that the quantity of publications you receive from SQA is about right?'

Figure 24: Quantity of Publications Received by Learners

Base: All Learners
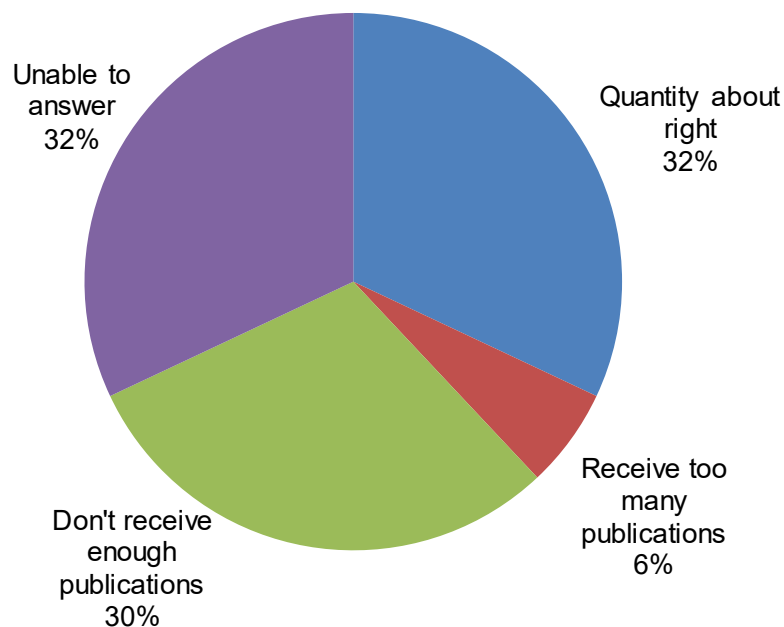
From Figure 24, it should be noted that Learners were relatively evenly split in terms of believing that they receive 'about the right quantity of publications from SQA' (32%) or that they 'don't receive enough publications from SQA' (30%).

Figure 24 also indicates that a small proportion of Learners (only 6%) stated that they receive too many publications and that a third of Learners (32%) felt unable to answer this question.

5.0 SQA CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROFILE

'How would you rate how well SQA consults and engages with you and your colleagues (for Teachers and those in Management roles)/you and your peers (for Learners)/you for Parents/Carers?

Figure 25: Rating of How Well SQA Consults or Engages - Average Scores
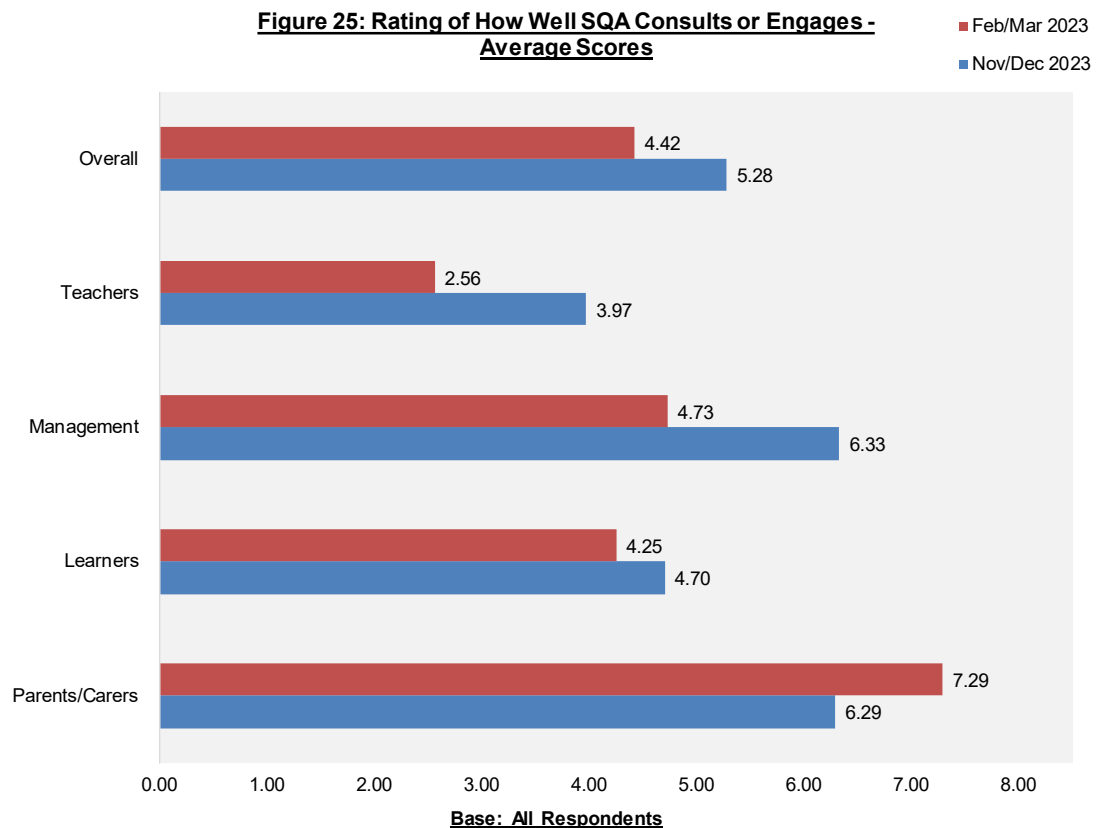
From Figure 25, it can be seen that, when respondents were asked to rate how well SQA consults or engages 'with themselves or their colleagues' (in the case of those in Management roles and Teachers), consults 'with themselves and their peers' (in the case of Learners) and 'consults and engages with them' (in the case of Parents/Carers), an average score of 5.28 out of a possible 10 was noted, with this score being notably higher amongst those in Management roles and Parents/Carers (6.33 and 6.29 respectively compared to 4.70 and 3.97 respectively for Learners and Teachers).

Figure 25 also indicates that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was a notable increase in the overall

rating here (rising from 4.42 to 5.28), with this increase being **primarily** driven by:

- Teachers (rising from 2.56 to 3.97)
- Those in Management roles (rising from 4.73 to 6.33)

It should be also noted that, since the last survey, there was a decrease in the rating provided here by Parents/Carers (falling from 7.29 to 6.29).

'Why did you choose this rating number?'

Figure 26: Reasons for Providing Good Rating re Consultation and Engagement (Unprompted)
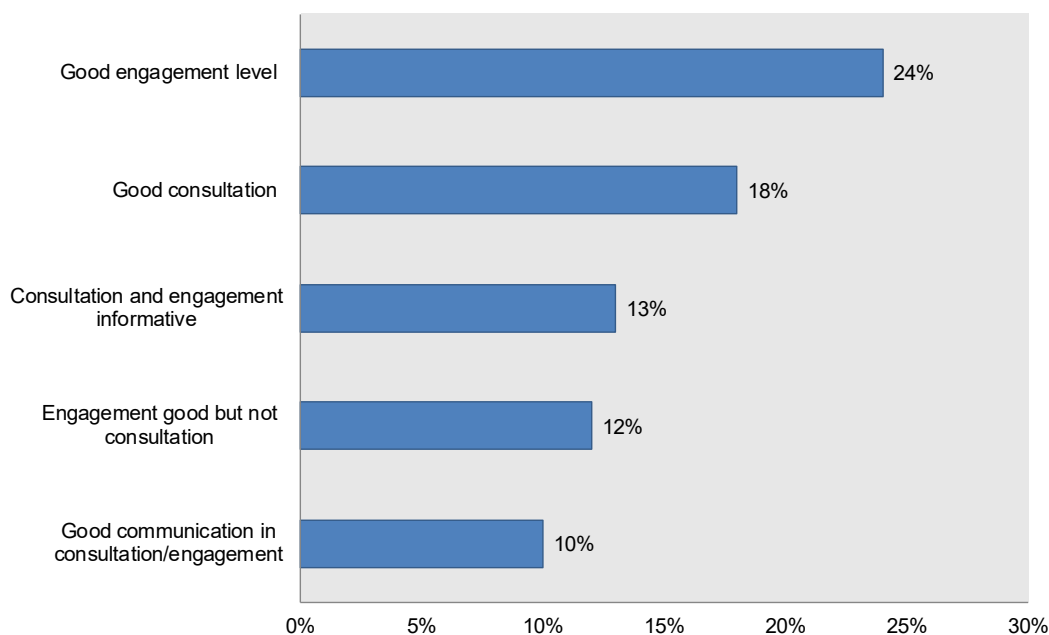
Base: Provided Rating of 6 to 10

When respondents providing a positive rating of SQA consultation and engagement (ie provided a rating of 6 to 10) were asked – on an unprompted basis – why this was the case, Figure 26 indicates that their **primary responses** focused around:

- SQA providing a good level of engagement (24%)
- The amount of consultation by SQA (18%)

Thereafter, Figure 26 notes two further other **unprompted reasons** which were cited for respondents providing a positive rating of SQA consultation and engagement, including:

- SQA's consultation and engagement being informative (13%)
- Good communication during consultation and engagement (10%)

It should also be noted that one in eight respondents here (12%) made reference to 'providing a good rating for engagement but not consultation'.

Further examination of the data indicated that the reasons noted above were most commonly cited by the following audience types[9]:

- **SQA providing a good level of engagement**: those in Management roles and Teachers (39% and 17% respectively)
- **Consultation by SQA being good**: those in Management roles and Teachers (29% and 13% respectively)
- **SQA's consultation and engagement being informative**: Parents/Carers and Learners (37% and 23% respectively)
- **Good communication during consultation and engagement**: Learners and Teachers (38% and 24% respectively)

It should also be noted that Teachers and those in Management roles were almost equally likely to make reference here to 'providing a good rating for engagement but not consultation' (17% and 15% respectively).

---

[9] The comparisons drawn here for Learners and Parents/Carers are largely indicative in nature

'Why did you choose this rating number?'

Figure 27: Reasons for Providing Poor Rating re Consultation and Engagement (Unprompted)
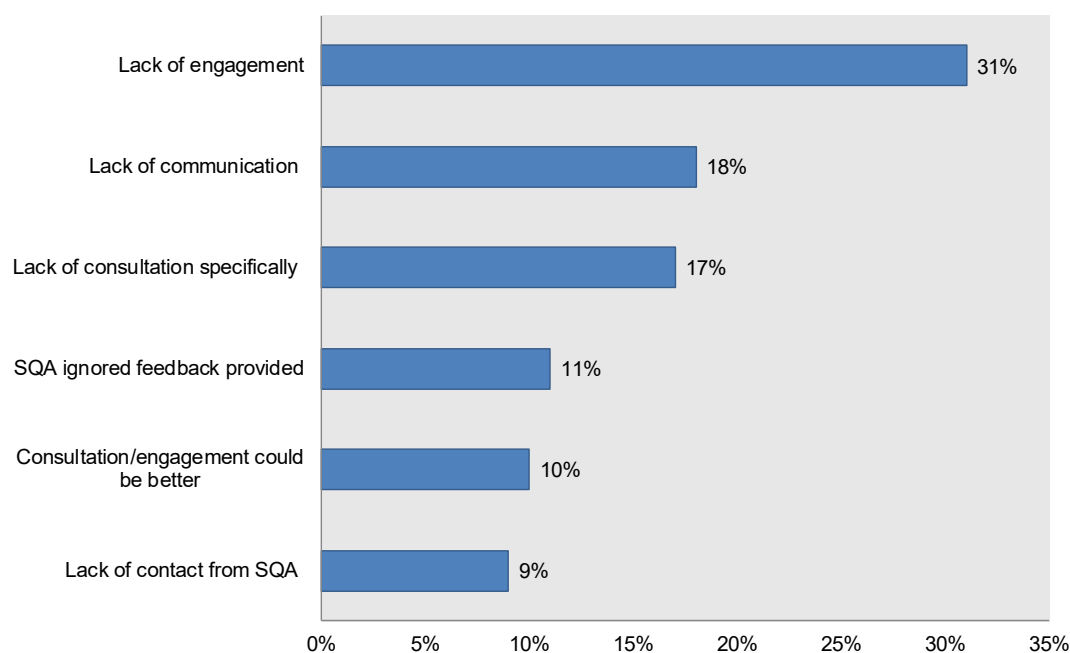
Base: Provided Rating of 1 to 5

When those providing a poor rating of SQA communication and engagement (those providing a rating of between 1 and 5) were also asked – again, on an unprompted basis – why they had done so, Figure 27 indicates that their **primary response** was that of 'a lack of engagement' (31%).

Thereafter, **secondary unprompted mention** was made here of a range of **other reasons**, including:

- Lack of communication (18%)
- Lack of consultation specifically (17%)

Further examination of the data here indicated that the reasons noted above were most commonly cited by the following audience types[10]:

---

[10] The comparisons drawn here for Learners and Parents/Carers are largely indicative in nature

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

- **Lack of engagement**: those in Management roles and, thereafter, Teachers and Learners (52%, 31% and 28% respectively)
- **Lack of communication**: Learners and Parents/Carers (both 27%)
- **Lack of consultation specifically**: Learners and, thereafter, Teachers (41% and 19% respectively)

6.0   SQA'S VALUES PROFILE

'How strongly would you agree or disagree that SQA can be trusted?'

Figure 28: SQA Profile - Agreement SQA Can Be Trusted

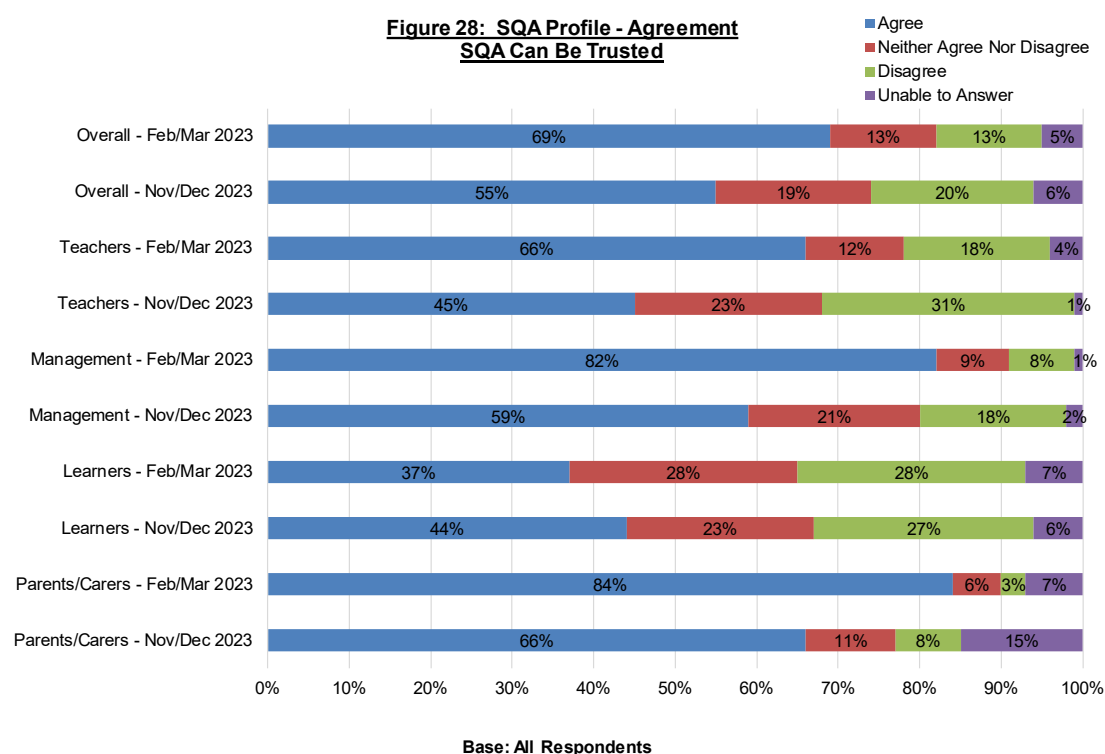|	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Unable to Answer
Overall - Feb/Mar 2023	69%	13%	13%	5%
Overall - Nov/Dec 2023	55%	19%	20%	6%
Teachers - Feb/Mar 2023	66%	12%	18%	4%
Teachers - Nov/Dec 2023	45%	23%	31%	1%
Management - Feb/Mar 2023	82%	9%	8%	1%
Management - Nov/Dec 2023	59%	21%	18%	2%
Learners - Feb/Mar 2023	37%	28%	28%	7%
Learners - Nov/Dec 2023	44%	23%	27%	6%
Parents/Carers - Feb/Mar 2023	84%	6%	3%	7%
Parents/Carers - Nov/Dec 2023	66%	11%	8%	15%

Base: All Respondents

Figure 28 indicates that well over half of respondents in November/ December 2023 (55%) **agreed** that 'SQA can be trusted' (ranging from 44% and 45% respectively for Learners and Teachers to 59% for those in Management roles and 66% for Parents/Carers).

Figure 28 also indicates that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was a notable decrease in agreement that SQA can be trusted (falling from 69% to 55%), with this fall being driven by:

- Teachers (falling from 66% to 45%)
- Those in Management roles (falling from 82% to 59%)
- Parents/Carers (falling from 84% to 66%)

It should also be noted that, since the last survey, there was an increase in the extent to which Learners agreed that 'SQA can be trusted' (rising from 37% to 44%).

Further examination of the data also indicated that between February/ March 2023 and November/December 2023:

- There was a decreasing extent to which Teachers believed that SQA can be trusted (falling from 66% to 45%), but an increasing extent to which Teachers provided a neutral response or disagreed that this was the case (increasing from 12% to 23% and 18% to 31% respectively)
- There was a decreasing extent to which those in Management roles agreed that SQA can be trusted (falling from 82% to 59%), but an increase in the extent to which those in Management roles provided a neutral response or disagreed that this is the case (increasing from 9% to 21% and 8% to 18% respectively)
- There was an increasing extent to which Learners agreed that SQA can be trusted (rising from 37% to 44%)
- There was a decreasing extent to which Parents/Carers agreed that SQA can be trusted (falling from 84% to 66%), but an increase in the extent to which Parents/Carers provided a neutral response here (rising from 6% to 11%), disagreed that this is the case (rising from 3% to 8%) and felt unable to express an opinion in this regard (rising from 7% to 15%)

'How strongly would you agree or disagree that SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively?'

**Figure 29: SQA Profile - Agreement
SQA is an Enabling Organisation**

Legend:
- Agree
- Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Unable to Answer

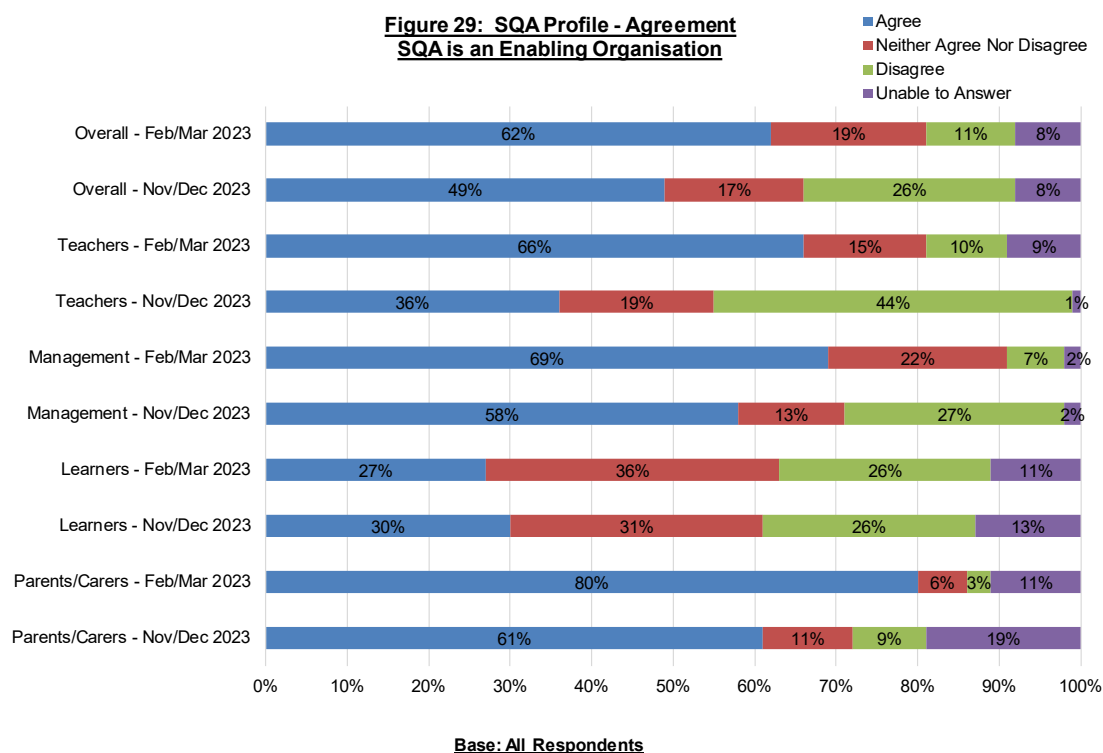|	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Unable to Answer
Overall - Feb/Mar 2023	62%	19%	11%	8%
Overall - Nov/Dec 2023	49%	17%	26%	8%
Teachers - Feb/Mar 2023	66%	15%	10%	9%
Teachers - Nov/Dec 2023	36%	19%	44%	1%
Management - Feb/Mar 2023	69%	22%	7%	2%
Management - Nov/Dec 2023	58%	13%	27%	2%
Learners - Feb/Mar 2023	27%	36%	26%	11%
Learners - Nov/Dec 2023	30%	31%	26%	13%
Parents/Carers - Feb/Mar 2023	80%	6%	3%	11%
Parents/Carers - Nov/Dec 2023	61%	11%	9%	19%

Base: All Respondents

Figure 29 indicates that almost half of respondents in November/ December 2023 (49%) **agreed** that 'SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively', with this ranging from 30% and 36% respectively for Learners and Teachers to 58% for those in Management roles and 61% for Parents/Carers.

Figure 29 also indicates that, since the last survey, there was a notable decrease in the extent to which SQA was believed to be an enabling organisation (falling from 62% to 49%), with this fall being driven by:

- Teachers (falling from 66% to 36%)
- Those in Management roles (falling from 69% to 58%)
- Parents/Carers (falling from 80% to 61%)

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

Further examination of the data also indicated that between February/ March and November 2023:

- There was a decreasing extent to which Teachers believed that 'SQA enables organisations to carry out their roles more effectively', together with a decreasing extent to which they felt unable to comment in this regard (falling from 66% to 36% and 9% to 1% respectively), but an increase in disagreement with this statement (rising from 10% to 44%)
- There was a decreasing extent to which those in Management roles agreed that SQA is an enabling organisation and provided a neutral response here (falling from 69% to 58% and 22% to 13% respectively), but an increase in disagreement with this statement (rising from 7% to 27%)
- There was a decreasing extent to which Parents/Carers agreed that SQA is an enabling organisation (falling from 80% to 61%) and an increase in the provision of neutral responses (rising from 6% to 11%), an increase in disagreement that this is the case (rising from 3% to 9%) and an increase in the extent to which Parents/Carers felt unable to express an opinion in this regard (rising from 11% to 19%)

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

'How strongly would you agree or disagree that SQA is a progressive organisation?'

Figure 30: SQA Profile - Agreement SQA is a Progressive Organisation

Base: All Respondents
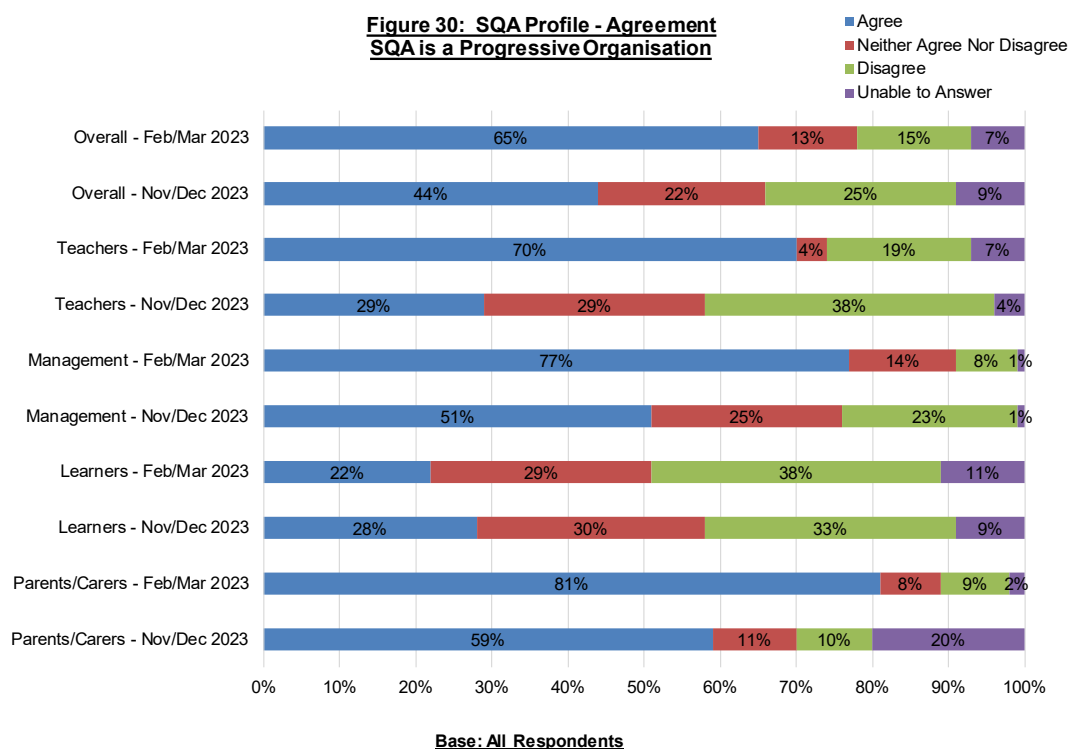
From Figure 30, it can be seen that, overall, well over two out of five respondents (44%) in November/December 2023 agreed that 'SQA is a progressive organisation', with this outcome being highest amongst Parents/Carers and those in Management roles (59% and 51% respectively compared to 29% and 28% respectively amongst Teachers and Learners).

Figure 30 also indicates that, between February/March 2023 and November/December 2023, there was a notable decrease in the extent to which respondents, overall, believed that SQA is a progressive organisation (falling from 65% to 44%), with this decrease being driven by:

- Teachers (falling from 70% to 29%)
- Those in Management roles (falling from 77% to 51%)
- Parents/Carers (falling from 81% to 59%)

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

It should also be noted that, since the last survey, there was an increase in Learners agreeing that SQA is a progressive organisation (rising from 22% to 28%).

Further examination of the data also indicates that between February/ March 2023 and November/December 2023:

- There was a decreasing extent to which Teachers believed that 'SQA is a progressive organisation' (falling from 70% to 29%), but increases in the provision of neutral responses and disagreement that this is the case (rising from 4% to 29% and 19% to 38% respectively)
- There was a decreasing extent to which those in Management roles agreed that SQA is progressive (falling from 77% to 51%), but an increasing provision of neutral responses and disagreement that this is the case (rising from 14% to 25% and 8% to 23% respectively)
- There was a decreasing extent to which Parents/Carers agreed that SQA is progressive (falling from 81% to 59%), and an increase in the extent to which Parents/Carers felt unable to express an opinion in this regard (rising from 2% to 20%)

7.0   KEY MESSAGES

7.1   SQA Profile

- Since the last survey, there has been an increase in the perceived high credibility of SQA amongst Teachers, those in Management roles and Learners and, as a corollary of this, there was a fall in the extent to which SQA is associated with having low credibility, particularly amongst Teachers

- Since the last survey, there has been an increase in levels of satisfaction with SQA's overall performance, with this being driven by Teachers, those in Management roles and Learners

- A significant majority of those in the School Audiences believe they know enough about SQA, particularly those in Management roles. Overall, this has changed very little since the last survey but has increased amongst those in Management roles

- There is some desire for those in the School Audiences to know more about SQA, but no highly notable desires were apparent in this regard

- A majority of those in the School Audiences had had contact from SQA or had contacted SQA, with there being almost no change in this regard, overall, since the last survey

7.2   SQA Qualifications Profile

- Most of those in the School Audiences believe that they know enough about a range of SQA qualifications. However, there are a range of variances within the School Audiences in this regard

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

- Since the last survey, overall, there were minimal changes in terms of beliefs that enough is known about qualifications of which those in the School Audiences were aware. However, again, there were variances in this regard within the School Audiences

- A wide range of SQA qualifications are perceived as having high credibility, with this being least likely to be the case in relation to National 1s to National 4s. Once again, however, there were a range of variances within the School Audiences in this regard in the latest survey

- Since February/March 2023, there was increased perceived high credibility of all of the qualifications under consideration

- A majority of respondents in the latest survey stated that their views about the credibility of qualifications they had heard of taken together hadn't changed over the past year, with those whose views who **had** changed being three times more likely to state that they had become less positive than more positive

- Since the last survey, there was a notable increase in the extent to which views had **not** changed over the last year, primarily amongst those in Management roles, with this audience also being most likely to state that their views had become less positive since the last survey

7.3   SQA Contact and Communications Profile

- Most of those within the School Audiences – particularly those in Management roles and Teachers – had had contact with SQA, with high levels of satisfaction being noted, particularly amongst Parents/Carers and those in Management roles (and levels of

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

satisfaction in this regard rising notably since February/March 2023)

- Overall, the School Audiences provided positive ratings of their communications from SQA in terms of their level of detail, clarity and timeliness, although there were variations here within the School Audiences. Since the last survey, there were improved ratings in the average scores here for these three aspects of communications from SQA

- There were a range of reasons for those in the School Audiences providing a positive response in terms of SQA's communications, with Teachers and those in Management roles being particularly positive about SQA providing a good service during communications and receiving regular communication updates from SQA

- The School Audiences – particularly those in Management roles, Teachers and Parents/Carers – would most prefer communications through direct mail (albeit that there was a possibility that respondents took this prompted response to mean 'direct email')

- Teachers and those in Management roles, particularly the latter:
  - Understand the communications they receive from SQA
  - Believe they receive clear information that helps them in their role
  - Believe they receive about the right amount of emails from SQA
  - Believe that the frequency of newsletters they receive from SQA is about right, with few Teachers and those in Management roles believing that they receive newsletters too frequently or don't receive newsletters frequently enough

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

7.4   SQA Consultation and Engagement Profile

- Parents/Carers and those in Management roles are most likely to believe that SQA consults and engages well with them and, since the last survey, there was a notable increase in the extent to which SQA's overall rating in this regard rose, particularly amongst Teachers and those in Management roles

- Positive ratings here are primarily a function of SQA providing a good level of consultation and engagement (with these factors being particularly cited by Teachers and those in Management roles), with negative ratings being primarily a function of a lack of consultation and/or engagement (with this being particularly cited by those in Management roles and, thereafter, Teachers and Learners)

7.5   SQA's Values Profile

- A majority of the School Audiences believe that SQA can be trusted, particularly those in Management roles and Parents/ Carers. The extent to which this is the case fell since the last survey amongst Teachers, those in Management roles and Parents/Carers, but rose amongst Learners

- Overall, half of the School Audiences believe that SQA is an enabling organisation (particularly amongst those in Management roles and Parents/Carers). However, this fell since the last survey (particularly amongst Teachers, those in Management roles and Parents/Carers)

- Less than half of those in the School Audiences overall believed that SQA is a progressive organisation, with this belief being considerably higher amongst Parents/Carers and those in

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY

Management roles and this belief being lower than that found in the last survey

Ashbrook
RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY