SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY   **PC4/3 i**

PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE – 18 NOVEMBER 2019   **For approval**

Minutes of the third meeting of the Performance Committee held on Monday 5 August 2019 at 10.30 am in Arrol, Lowden.

Members	**Officers**	**In attendance**
* Ms E Craig (Convenor)	* Ms J Blair	▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ SQA
* Ms A Davis	* ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮	Ms E Gourlay, SQA (PC3/7 only)
* Mr H McKay	* Mr S Borley	Mr D Middleton, SQA Chair
* Mr R Stewart	Ms M Cahill	
	* Mr A Dickson	
	* Mr L Downie	
	* Ms L Ellison	
	Mr J McMorris	
	* Ms F Robertson	
* indicates present	Dr G Stewart	

3/1   WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Convenor welcomed everyone to the third meeting, including SQA's new Chief Executive, Ms Fiona Robertson, to her first meeting. A welcome was also extended to Mr David Middleton, SQA Chair.

Apologies were recorded for Ms Maidie Cahill, Mr McMorris and Dr Stewart.

3/2   DECLARATION OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest declared on the agenda.

3/3   PREVIOUS MEETING

i   Minutes from previous meeting

A minor typographical error was highlighted with regards to a verb tense and it was advised that this would be amended on the electronic version of the minutes.

Subject to the minor amend the minutes of the second meeting of the Committee held on 20 May 2019 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

ii   Action Grid

The Committee noted the contents of the Action Grid.

iii   Workplan

The Committee noted the contents of the workplan.

3/4   **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

3/5   **OVERVIEW OF THE 2019-20 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REVIEW**
3/6   **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

The Convenor reminded the Committee that the nature and content of the Quarterly Performance Review (QPR) remained under development for 2020-21 onwards. In the intervening year, and in order to improve and focus discussion, improvements had been made to the 2019-20 QPR. Mr Borley provided a detailed overview of the changes and the following was highlighted:

- The data remained based on what SQA had available.
- Any measure that was not strategic has been removed.
- Measures reported to other Committees/SQA Board had been removed with the exception of the ISO standards data (as this would allow the Committee to monitor that SQA remained compliant).
- The RAG scoring was calculated from the weighted average and that weighting could be adjusted over time, if required.
- Strategic Goal 9 (SQA Accreditation) had been included for information, and would be discussed at the Accreditation Committee.
- The anticipated process would be for the QPR to be reviewed by the Management Team, followed by discussion and ratification/alterations by the Executive Management Team (EMT), with any narrative included on any changes in the commentary column, prior to presentation to the Committee.

The Committee agreed that there had been significant improvements to the QPR, and this would allow for focussed discussions.

Quarterly Performance Review

In the absence of Ms Cahill, Mr Borley led on presenting the report and the following areas were covered in the course of discussion:

- Strategic Goal 1

  The Committee noted that the one metric reported at amber was a result of a high target set by SQA (achieved 93% out of a 98% target).

- Strategic Goal 5

  Discussing the performance measures, the Committee agreed that it was useful to have two separate metrics for surveys - stakeholder and customer.

  The one metric reported at amber was a result of an increase in candidate numbers with one of the three contracts with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (Dangerous Good Driver Training).

- Strategic Goal 6

  The biennial SQA People Survey was anticipated to be launched in late September/early October. EMT were finalising the questions, ensuring that, where possible, they were benchmarked with the Civil Service.

Following discussion of the QPR the Committee suggested some additional minor improvements to allow for further focused discussion:

- Where SQA had the data, include benchmarking across all Strategic Goals.
- Summary pages - Within target columns across all Strategic Goals, where appropriate, specify if the target was set by SQA or externally.
- Strategic Goal 3 - Expand the measures to ensure clarity around the Scottish Government's internationalisation agenda and how SQA was aligning to this. In addition, include any targets.
- Strategic Goal 8 - Include percentages where possible against targets to allow comparisons over time, as the data builds.
- Overall formatting - present the data so the RAG report on the first page and the trend data at the back of the pack could be viewed together.

3/7 **STRATEGIC BEST VALUE AND EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME**

Ms Elaine Gourlay, Head of Organisational Development and Change Management, was welcomed to the meeting.

Ms Ellison advised that a staff workshop led by the OD and Change Management Team had taken place to discuss the Best Value Framework. Further work had also been done on utilising Audit Scotland's Self-Assessment model for Best Value. An action plan based on the model would be established for consideration and approval by EMT.

She went on to explain that SQA had the opportunity to take forward a sustainable funding model over the next few months as part of the discussions around the Scottish Government's multiyear Spending Review. It was anticipated that this would help facilitate conversations with the Scottish Government regarding SQA's funding requirements. Given the increasing pressure on funding and the complexity of SQA's activities, the Committee noted the importance of embedding a Best Value culture, which would facilitate the continual identification of even more efficient and cost effective ways of doing things.

The Committee noted that it was particularly important that buy-in was secured across the organisation.

Ms Gourlay left the meeting.

3/8 **DEEP-DIVE UPDATE**

The Convenor advised that following the last meeting, members of the Committee had met offline to identify areas across SQA which might merit further consideration at the Committee. These included:

- International business.
- HR Strategy.
- Engagement through communications.
- Organisation culture.
- Preparing for future changes in types and content of qualifications.
- Managing stakeholders.
- Digital strategy.
- The SQA brand viewed from outside the organisation.
- Managing change.

- Financial Performance.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive and EMT would consider these further. The Committee discussed and agreed the importance of aligning its work with the Performance Framework going forward. Its focus, including deep-dives, would stem from the Performance Framework.

3/9   **FOCUS FOR NEXT MEETING**

As previously agreed (PC3/8 refers) it was anticipated that the next meeting would finalise the schedule for the workplan going forward.

Referring back to a previous discussion on the SQA's People Survey (PC3/6), the Committee suggested that if EMT felt it timely then a discussion on the survey could be the focus at the November meeting.

3/10   **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

In closing the meeting, the Convenor took the opportunity to acknowledge that this was Ms Ellison's last meeting of the Committee and thanked her for her commitment to SQA since 2011.

3/11   **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee would take place on Monday 18 November 2019, in Arrol, Lowden.

The Convenor advised that going forward the start times of meetings would be at the slightly earlier time of 10.30am, and the Committee noted this.