



Research, Insight and Analysis

Briefing Paper

Prepared by		[REDACTED]	
Date	March 2021	Contact	[REDACTED]@sqa.org.uk

Learner Survey – SQA Website and MySQA

Contents

Timing	2
Response	2
SQA Website results	2
How would you rate the SQA website?	2
What is the best thing about the SQA website?	3
What is the worst thing about the SQA website?.....	3
Thinking about the most recent time you used the SQA website, how easy was it to find what you were looking for?	4
What were you looking for?.....	5
Do you find the information on the SQA website easy to understand?	5
MySQA results	6
How would you rate MySQA?	6
Did you find what you were looking for?.....	6
What were you looking for?.....	6
What one thing do you think SQA should do to improve MySQA?	7
Non-users of MySQA	8

Timing

Date disseminated: Thurs 28 Jan 2021 (1pm); **Reminder sent:** Thurs 4 Feb 2021

Date closed: Thurs 11 Feb 2021

Response

Number of completed responses: **304** (13 of these respondents did not qualify for the survey)

Invites to Pulse Survey group of learners: **911** (not including emails which bounced-back, etc)

Survey completion rate (from surveys begun): **61%**

Survey response rate (from invites): **33%**

Though 911 invitations were issued via email, this survey was open and anonymous and is likely to have been forwarded. Therefore, the survey response rate is likely to be an overestimate. Participants were required to confirm that they were S4 to S6 learners before beginning the survey.

SQA Website results

How would you rate the SQA website on a scale of 1 to 5? (Where 1 is the worst rating and 5 is the best)

Average (mean) score: **4.31** (out of 5)

Website rating

Answer Choices	Responses	
1 (Worst)		1.72% 5
2		5.84% 17
3		31.27% 91
4		52.92% 154
5 (Best)		8.25% 24

What is the best thing about the SQA website?

251 respondents gave free-text, unprompted answers to this question.

The vast majority of responses related to the materials available on the site, particularly past papers, and many specified more than one 'best thing' about it.

Materials:

- **Past papers: 62%** (155 respondents)
 - The majority of respondents mentioned the availability of past papers as the best thing about the SQA website
- **Information available: 12%** (31 respondents)
 - Many liked the information available, including course information, exam information and news updates
- **Marking schemes: 7%** (17 respondents)
 - Marking schemes were mainly noted by respondents who also answered 'past papers'
- **Course specifications: 4%** (10 respondents)
- **Understanding Standards materials: 2%** (4 respondents)
- **Other materials, or resources more generally: 3%** (8 respondents)

Website design:

- **Access to materials: 21%** (53 respondents)
 - These respondents commented on the good accessibility of materials on the website, particularly in relation to past papers
- **Navigation: 16%** (39 respondents)
- **Design: 8%** (19 respondents)
 - Aspects of the design that they liked included the simplicity and colour palette
- **Usability: 6%** (16 respondents)
- **Search: 2%** (5 respondents)

What is the worst thing about the SQA website?

199 respondents gave free-text, unprompted answers to this question.¹

Themes include the lack of older past papers on the site, navigation and search, layout and design, and the speed of the site.

- **Navigation: 28%** (55 respondents)
 - Some felt that navigation was complicated, and that it was difficult to find what they were looking for.
- **Limited past papers: 19%** (37 respondents)
 - Most who gave this answer wanted access to older past papers on the website, while a small number mentioned the removal of copyrighted material such as music audio files and passages in English papers.
- **Nothing bad: 12%** (24 respondents)

¹ Respondents tended to give more detail for this question than the previous one (eg one respondent might answer that they like the navigation, while another dislikes it because they find it complicated).

- Though this question was not compulsory, some respondents answered to make it clear that they thought that there was nothing wrong with the site.
- **Layout: 11%** (21 respondents)
 - Those who did not like the layout felt that it was confusing, too busy and sometimes disorganised
- **Lack of information: 10%** (20 respondents)
 - Most who felt there was a lack of information referred to looking for information that was up-to-date, for example on assessment arrangements, but some mentioned a lack of marking schemes and other subject materials.
- **Speed/access: 9%** (18 respondents)
 - Most of these respondents felt the website was sometimes slow and noted that certain past papers/texts do not load.
- **Design: 8%** (15 respondents)
 - Some of those who criticised the design felt it was outdated, while others mentioned the colours and clarity.
- **Language/complexity: 6%** (12 respondents)
 - Most of these responses felt that there was too much text, and that it could be overcomplicated, formal, or overly vague, which made it difficult for learners to understand. In some cases this clearly related to marking schemes and other materials rather than the website copy.
- **Usability: 5%** (10 respondents)
 - Some learners find the site difficult or confusing to use. This includes those who felt it was unintuitive, over-complicated or confusing. One response noted that past papers were difficult to use from a phone browser.

Thinking about the most recent time you used the SQA website, how easy was it to find what you were looking for?

Respondents were asked to answer from 'Very difficult' to 'Very easy'. I have converted this to a numerical Likert scale, where 'Very difficult' is 1 and 'Very easy' is 5.

Average (mean) score: **3.86** (out of 5)

Ease of use:

Answer Choices	Responses		
Very difficult		1.72%	5
Fairly difficult		8.93%	26
Not too difficult		20.27%	59
Fairly easy		39.52%	115
Very easy		29.55%	86



What were you looking for?

259 respondents answered this question.

The vast majority of respondents were looking for specific past papers, with a smaller number looking for course specifications, course changes, guidance and updates, and news and announcements.

Of the 31 respondents who had answered that they found it 'very difficult' or 'fairly difficult' to find what they were looking for, 27 clarified what it was they had been trying to find. Of these, almost half were looking for information relating to awarding 2021 updates and coursework, while a third were looking for past papers.

Do you find the information on the SQA website easy to understand?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes		87.11% 250
No		12.89% 37
Answered: 287 Skipped: 17	Response Total:	287

Thirty-seven respondents (13%) found the information on SQA's website difficult to understand. Of these, 27 commented on why this was. The main themes arising from this are:

- It is not aimed at learners and it has too much jargon and SQA-centric or teacher-centric language.
- It is overly wordy, with too much text in blocks that are too large.
- The language and content is over-complicated and it should be straight to the point.
- There is a lack of clarity.






MySQA results

219 respondents had a MySQA account



Thinking about the most recent time that you used MySQA, how would you rate it on a scale of 1 to 5? (Where 1 is the lowest rating and 5 is the highest)

Average (mean) score: **4.81** (out of 5)

MySQA rating:

Answer Choices	Responses
1 (Worst)	 0.91% 2
2	 7.31% 16
3	 25.57% 56
4	 47.95% 105
5 (Best rating)	 18.26% 40

Did you find what you were looking for? (The most recent time the respondent had used MySQA)

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	 93.78% 196
No	 6.22% 13
Answered: 209 Skipped: 95	Response Total: 209

The vast majority found what they were looking for, which fits with the high general rating for MySQA.

What were you looking for?

Of the 146 respondents who detailed what they were looking for:

- 72% had been looking for SQA results
- 7% information on the qualifications for which they were registered
- 4% course codes
- 4% exam timetables
- 3% their SCN and other information that SQA holds

What one thing do you think SQA should do to improve MySQA?

There were 113 unprompted, free-text responses to this question, with some giving more than one suggestion.

The most consistent message was that SQA should consider updating the site design, to make a more modern user interface.

Results showed that MySQA could be improved in the following ways:

- **Cannot be improved:** 28% (32 respondents)
 - These respondents provided an answer but most did not feel that anything could be improved, while others answered N/A.
- **Update design:** 23% (26 respondents)
 - There were many comments about the user interface of the site looking outdated
- **Improve login/access:** 15% (17 respondents)
 - Some respondents had difficulties logging in, changing passwords and dealing with the sign-up process for MySQA
- **Improve layout:** 8% (9 respondents)
 - Respondents would like the layout of the site to be simpler and clearer
- **Publicise site:** 6% (7 respondents)
 - MySQA should be promoted more, with an emphasis on informing learners how they can use it

Smaller numbers of respondents suggested:



- Making MySQA available as an App or integrating it into the main SQA website
- Improving navigation, as well as accessibility for dyslexic learners
- Giving more detailed information on grades
- Using MySQA for updating learners more broadly than their exam results
- Providing SCNs directly from MySQA

Non-users of MySQA

72 respondents (25%) did not have a MySQA account.

Have you heard of MySQA?

Of the 72 who did not have an account, only 20 had heard of MySQA.

Answer Choices	Responses		
Yes		27.78%	20
No		72.22%	52
Answered: 72 Skipped: 232	Response Total:		72

What would encourage you to sign up to MySQA?

Those who had heard of MySQA were asked what would encourage them to sign up. There were 16 responses. Some suggested that more information on MySQA through their school, advertising, or in a MySQA guide, would help, while others either were not sure, did not want to sign up, or wanted to sign up but did not have their SCN.