

National Qualifications 2024 Strategic Group

Date: Friday 27 October 2023

Time: 09:30 – 10:30

MS Teams

Members: Andrea Bradley; Anne Campbell; Cheryl Burnett; Clare Hicks; Dr Gerald Prescott, Gill Stewart; Graham Hutton; James Cowan; Jamie Dunlop; Jean Blair; John Booth; Justin Walker; Lorraine Davidson; Emma Sinclair; Stewart Nicolson; Olivia Brown; Andrew Creamer; Olaf Stando; Edward Carroll

Attending: Donna Stewart; Simon Allan; [redacted name]; [redacted name]; [redacted name]; [redacted name]; Richard Pidgeon

Apologies: Fiona Robertson, Martyn Ware; Seamus Searson; Gillian Hamilton; Tim Chan; Ollie Bray

Notes

Item	Topic
2.1	<p>Welcome The Chair welcomed members to the second meeting of the NQ24 Strategic Group.</p>
2.2	<p>Review of previous minutes</p> <p>Members approved the note of the previous meeting held on 29 September.</p> <p>Donna Stewart informed members that SQA intends to publish the minutes of the NQ24 Strategic Group.</p>
2.3	<p>Dual entry [redacted name] presented the findings from a recent research project looking at dual presentation, including entry figures and attainment. Also included was a further analysis of National 5 Mathematics, covering National 4 dual entry and Application of Mathematics dual entry.</p> <p>Members discussed the findings and the reasons behind the increase in dual entries. It was acknowledged that whilst there are some learners who may benefit, the figures would suggest that there are centres who are entering learners for both qualifications are doing so for other reasons. These may include perceptions of National 4, the higher insight points assigned to National 5 qualifications or parental misunderstandings of the different qualifications and how they should be used.</p> <p>It was noted that it may be worthwhile to revisit communications that were published by the previous Cabinet Secretary John Swinney on dual entry.</p> <p>It was agreed that SQA will look at how they can communicate and explain the different pathways in Mathematics, including the difference between Maths and Application of Maths.</p>

2.4	<p>Approach to evaluation</p> <p>Simon Allan outlined the approach that SQA is taking to evaluate the arrangements used for National Qualifications in 2022 – 23. As carried out in 2021 and 2022 it was felt that it was appropriate to evaluate the 2023 NQ assessment approach. Given the valuable data that has been collected through these evaluations, SQA is planning to put in place a standard annual evaluation template to explore each year’s NQ assessment approach. The evaluation will look at three strands: data analysis, experiences of National Qualifications assessment and perceptions of standards. Simon highlighted that SQA has taken a variety of steps to ensure that a representative sample of views is being sought.</p> <p>Members discussed the approach and agreed that it is positive that SQA is taking an ongoing approach to evaluation and is being transparent. It was felt that it would be beneficial for SQA to take the additional step and communicate to the education community how their research and evaluation impacts and influences change from one year to the next.</p> <p>It was suggested that SQA might want to consider looking at the changes in how assessment arrangements are used by learners with Additional Support Needs. Simon confirmed that a separate piece of research is being undertaken on Assessment Arrangements by SQA’s Equalities Team.</p>
2.5	<p>Appeals update</p> <p>The Chair, Jean Blair, updated members on progress with NQ2023 Appeals. Around 1000 priority appeals were delivered in September and the outcome of standard Appeals will be communicated on the 31 October once all schools have returned from the October school break. Gill Stewart thanked the teachers and lecturers, in their appointee roles, for supporting this year’s Appeals. Statistics related to NQ2023 Appeals will be published in December.</p>
2.6	<p>Communications and engagement</p> <p>John Booth provided an update on recent and upcoming communications activity. A Q&A for NQ2023 Appeals will be published on the SQA website on the 31 October.</p> <p>A National Qualifications booklet ‘Your National Qualifications’ has been published today on the SQA website, with hard copies to be made available in centres from next week. This publication includes information on Coursework, including the use of Artificial Intelligence. John also reminded members that 2023 Course Reports will shortly be published on the SQA website.</p> <p>It was noted by members that it was positive to see better visibility of SQA support, particularly online.</p>
2.7	<p>Next Steps/AOB</p> <p>No other business was raised.</p>
	<p>Date of the next meeting - Friday 24 November 2023</p>