

## SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

B165/1.4

### BOARD OF MANAGEMENT – 18 SEPTEMBER 2024 For approval

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Management held at 1pm on Monday  
5 August 2024 by video conference.

#### Members

- \* Ms S Rogers (Chair)
- \* Ms F Robertson (Chief Executive)
- \* Ms A Davis  
Mr S Hagney
- \* Mrs J Handley  
Dr W Mayne
- \* Mr J Morton
- \* Mr G Smith
- \* Professor K Thomson
- \* Ms M Wailes

#### Officers

- \* Ms J Blair
- \* Mr J Booth
- \* Mr M Campbell
- \* Mr A Dickson
- \* Mrs D Mahmoud
- \* Mr J McMorris
- \* Dr G Stewart
- \* Mr M Ware

- \* Indicates present

#### In attendance

Mr S Borley, Head of Chief Executive's Office, SQA

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, SQA

Mr C Boulter, Head of Data Analytics, SQA

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and expressed gratitude to the organisation for its efforts in delivering the examination diet and preparing for certification, which would take place the following day.

She passed over to the Chief Executive who introduced the briefing by discussing the attainment in awards, national certificates, and national progression awards across SCQF levels 1-7. She noted the significant growth in uptake of these courses, which reflects a diversification of the curriculum. This achievement should be recognised and celebrated alongside successes in National 5 to Advanced Higher assessments.

The Chief Executive reminded the Board of the awarding approach taken in 2024, highlighting the return to full course assessments, including coursework, and a grading approach that accounted for these changes where appropriate. It was emphasised that, while comparisons between years should be approached with caution, learners can be confident that their qualifications are credible and fair. Higher and Further Education institutions can also be assured that standards and integrity have been maintained.

Dr Stewart provided an overview of the analysis of the return to full assessments, showing that performance in coursework components, where comparable, was broadly in line with pre-pandemic performance. Returning to full course assessment seems to have been the right thing to do, and will support learners as they progress to the next steps in education, training, or employment.

Mr Boulter presented an overview of the high-level statistics regarding candidate numbers, entries, attainment, and headline results.

Ms Blair provided an overview of the comparison between teacher estimates and outcomes. She also informed the Board that all arrangements were in place for the appeals service to open at 9am on the morning of certification. This service will be free of charge and accessible directly to learners. Additionally, she highlighted the expansion of the trial allowing access to marked exam papers, now covering five courses. In line with recent years, a full evaluation of awarding would be conducted. Appeals information had been included in the certificate envelopes to be sent directly to candidates.

Finally, Mr Booth presented the communications and engagement plan for results day, focusing on celebrating the achievements of learners across the breadth of qualifications. He emphasised the resilience of this cohort of learners who have persevered through the challenges of the pandemic and provided an overview of the key messages that would be communicated.

The Board discussed various aspects of the communications planned around results day and the delivery of the exam diet. While recognising that results day is primarily for celebrating learners' achievements, the Board also acknowledged the importance of highlighting the significant work undertaken by the organisation to deliver a successful exam diet and certification.

The Board went on to discuss the increase in vocational qualification uptake, the availability of data on the number of candidates in receipt of assessments arrangements, and patterns of attainment in English and Maths.

In closing, the Chief Executive took the opportunity to highlight that this would be Dr Stewart's last results day before her retirement later in the year, noting her thanks to Dr Stewart for her many years of dedicated service to the organisation. The Chair and Board members echoed these sentiments, wishing Dr Stewart all the best in her retirement.

The Chair thanked members for their time and reminded all attendees that the information discussed remained under embargo until publication the following day.