

Minutes of the eighty-fifth meeting of the Advisory Council, held at 12.00pm on Thursday 12 January 2023 by Microsoft Teams.

Members

- * Mrs Jane Handley (Convenor
- * Mr Seán Hagney (Deputy Convenor)
- * Mr David Barnett (until AdvC85/6)
Ms Wendy Burton
- * Mr Tim Frew
- * Mrs Diane Greenlees
Dr Colm Harmon
- * Mr Iain Hawker (until AdvC85/6)
- * Ms Sonia Kordiak
Ms Margaret Lannon
- * Mr David Macdonald
- * Mr Stuart McKenna
- * Mr Stewart Nicolson
- * Mr Grahame Smith
Dr Sally Smith

Officers

- * Ms Jean Blair
- * Mr John McMorris
- * Ms Fiona Robertson
- * Dr Gill Stewart

In attendance

- [REDACTED]
- Mr John Booth, SQA
- Ms Margaret Farragher, SQA
- Ms Liz McGrath, SQA
- [REDACTED]

* indicates present

85/1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Convenor welcomed everyone to the eighty-fifth meeting of the Advisory Council including John Booth, Director of Communications, Margaret Farragher, Director of Policy, Analysis and Standards and [REDACTED], Policy and Research Manager.

Apologies had been received from Ms Burton, Dr Harmon, Ms Lannon and Dr Smith. There were no conflicts of interest declared.

85/2 PREVIOUS MEETING

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██████████. Out of scope

85/3 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no other matters raised.

85/4 **NATIONAL 4, NATIONAL 5, HIGHER AND ADVANCED HIGHER NATIONAL COURSE ASSESSMENT MODIFICATIONS SESSION 2023-2024**

The Convenor invited ██████████ to present on the modification plans for 2023-23.

██████████ explained that the previous modifications implemented across subjects and levels resulted in variable success. English and Media had proved successful, however, overall, there had been a notable impact on performance. It was also highlighted that not all course content had been covered and learning had been impacted as a result.

The Advisory were asked to consider whether:

- 1) The modifications made to National Course assessments should remain in full in 2023-2024

OR

- 2) The full 2019 National course assessment requirements should be reinstated in 2023-2024

OR

- 3) The full 2019 course assessment requirements should be reinstated in 2023-2024 with some minor refinements to course assessments in some subjects, where there is strong evidence to support such refinements eg a positive outcome from the modifications.

The Advisory Council discussed the three possible options and agreed to go with the third option, although some members were surprised that no gradual option had been provided.

While the decision to go with option three was favoured, concerns were raised. Members of the Advisory Council highlighted that additional work may be required of teachers to help candidates in S3 prepare for qualifications. Those sitting Higher and Advanced Highers may also experience a step up with no modifications.

SQA confirmed that engagement with subject experts had been undertaken and that only assessment was being changed, not the course. It was noted that in comparison to the Rest of the UK (RoUK) Scotland's modifications had been more significant and kept for longer.

The Advisory Council agreed that now was the time to move beyond from the modifications made because of the pandemic but suggested that the impact of Covid on different cohorts should be considered.

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