

Redacted - section 38(1)(b) personal data

SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE – 25 OCTOBER 2022

Minutes of the one hundred and sixty-ninth meeting of the Accreditation Committee held on Tuesday 25 October 2022.

Members

*Mr G Smith (Convenor)
*Ms V Mann
Mr P Campbell
*Ms J Handley
Ms A Newton
Ms E Hutton
Ms L Trainer
Mr A Clark
*Ms F Robertson
*Ms K Summers
*Mr I Wilson

Observers

Mr D Middleton
*Ms E Townhill (SG)
*Ms P Radcliffe (SG)
Mr F Quinn (SDS)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Officers

*Mr G Brown
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

* indicates present

169 ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Convenor informed Members of the format of the meeting

The Convenor asked Members to declare whether they had any 'conflicts of interest' in the papers. Mr G Smith declared an interest if apprenticeship developments should come up.

169 WELCOME

The Convenor welcomed Members to the meeting. The Convenor introduced two new members Ms Kirsty Summers, Head of Workforce and Skills for the Scotch Whisky Association and Mr Ian Wilson, Dawnfresh. [REDACTED] was also introduced as the new [REDACTED], SQA Accreditation.

169 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr P Campbell, Ms E Townhill, Mr A Clark, Ms A Newton, M F Quinn, Ms E Hutton, Ms L Trainer and Mr D Middleton.

169 RESIGNATION

Members were informed that Mr P Campbell and Ms L Trainer had resigned.

Action: [REDACTED] will send a thank you letter to Mr Campbell and Ms Trainer on behalf of the Accreditation Committee.

169/01 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the one hundred and sixty-eighth meeting of the Accreditation Committee were approved as a correct record.

169/02 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

169/03 AWARDING BODY AUDIT REPORTS (BHS AND STA)

[REDACTED] introduced paper AC169/3 and provided an update on the above Awarding Body Audit Reports.

Members were informed that two audits had been carried out which raised three Issues. One Issue has been closed out. The remaining two Issues have not passed their closed-out date.

[REDACTED] informed members that the awarding bodies are fully engaged with SQA Accreditation and there are no concerns related to the outstanding issues.

Outcome: Members approved the Awarding Body Audit Reports.

169/04 PROVIDER MONITORING VISIT REPORTS (BIAB, HIGHFIELD, SQA, EAL, IMI, LANTRA AWARDS AND MP AWARDS)

[REDACTED] introduced paper AC169/4 and provided an update on the above Provider Monitoring Visit Reports.

Members were informed that seven provider monitoring visits were carried out. 22 Issues were raised and 10 Issues had been closed out. The remaining 12 Issues have not passed their closed-out date.

It was highlighted that one Issue was risk rated as 'very high' members were informed that the awarding body concerned is aiming to have this closed out by 30 November 2022.

There were discussions around whether there were any common themes with regards to Issues being raised. Ms McKay informed members that a wider analysis would be carried at the end of the audit cycle in March 2023.

[REDACTED] informed members that this formed part of the planning session for next year's annual cycle. Reviewing issues and recommendations across the year, will help inform where we may scope audits and provider monitoring activity in the next

years cycle. This will also feed into the regulatory activity planning in relation to how many face to face visits to be undertaken in the next cycle. [REDACTED] will provide members with an update at the Accreditation Committee in July 2023.

It was suggested that using a newsletter to circulate common or regular themes to awarding bodies would encourage them to consider these in advance of any audit visits.

Outcome: Members approved the Provider Monitoring Visit Reports.

Action: [REDACTED] to provide members at the meeting in July 2023 with an update on the regulatory activity planning in relation to the number of face to face visits to be undertaken in the next cycle.

169/05 SQA ACCREDITATION'S RISK REGISTER

Mr Brown introduced paper AC169/5 and updated Members on the SQA Accreditation's Risk Register.

Members were informed that two new risks have been added to the Accreditation Risk Register. The first is in relation to the lack of enquiries being submitted to SQA Accreditation from awarding bodies seeking approval. It was noted that this had been discussed at the last Accreditation Committee.

The second is in relation to the Independent Review of the Skills Delivery System. Members noted that, included within the Purpose and Scope of this review, is "the development and management of National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the commissioning of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)". Within the current model, SQA Accreditation provides information on which SVQs it considers are in need of review and this is then shared, discussed and agreed with Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Government. The need to engage with the Independent Review was emphasised to ensure that the role of SQA Accreditation is recognised and preserved in the future.

It was noted that Mr Brown is meeting with Ms Hannah Garrow, from the Scottish Government Team responsible for the Skills Review, on Wednesday 26 October to discuss the role of SQA Accreditation, and that the outcome of this discussion will give some indication as to the nature of the risk and how it should articulate in the Risk Register.

In noting the wider public finance environment, members agreed that the risk rating on the funding of SQA Accreditation should be increased from amber to red. Mr Brown was asked to check if any short fall in funding would be met by SQA corporate.

Members were informed that there has been a lack of new enquiries from awarding bodies seeking approval. It was suggested that this could be a result of the uncertainty caused by the ongoing education reform work, especially the lack of clarity as to the future location of the accreditation function in the new landscape. It was noted that during the COVID period two new awarding bodies were approved and that one other awarding body has indicated that it is waiting for the outcome of the reform process before deciding if it should seek approval. It was also noted that some approved awarding bodies are awaiting the outcome of the reform process before deciding on whether or not to continue as such.

There was some discussion around the fast-track approval process but to date SQA Accreditation had not had a chance to test this process. New awarding bodies are normally encouraged to use the full process.

Outcome: Members discussed and noted the SQA Accreditation's Risk Register.

Action: Mr Brown will look at the wording for risk 22 ACC 31 R.

Action: The risk rating on the funding of SQA Accreditation should be increased from amber to red. Mr Brown was asked to check if any short fall in funding would be met by SQA corporate.

Action: [REDACTED] to circulate to members the link to the Accreditation glossary.

169/06 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mr Brown introduced paper AC169/6 and provided Members with an update on the Quarterly Performance Report for the second quarter of 2022 - 2023.

Members were informed that the awarding body forum will be taking place in early November and Accreditation Committee members were welcome to attend.

Outcome: Members discussed and noted the Quarterly Performance Report.

169/07 STANDARDS AND FRAMEWORKS COMMISSIONING

[REDACTED] introduced paper AC168/09 and updated Members on the projects.

[REDACTED] reported that the Commissioning of Standards & Framework project work concluded in late September when the contracts for Scottish Qualification projects were issued.

There are a total of 54 National Occupational Standards (NOS) reviews and 17 Scottish Qualifications. With only six months to complete the Scottish Qualifications work, it may be a challenge for some of the projects to be completed on time. This is particularly important this year when Skills Development Scotland (SDS) will not be able to accrue payments due to 2022-23 being the end of the four-year commissioning programme.

Members discussed the potential impact of this and were informed that Accreditation Managers will keep a close eye on all reviews and provide support and guidance wherever it may be required.

Of the projects commissioned in 2021-22, 100% have now been completed. The last four Apprenticeships Frameworks for Hairdressing and Barbering were approved by the Apprenticeship Approvals Group on 6 October 2022.

The year-to-date average turnaround for NOS approvals is 3.1 days for 65 submissions, as presented in Appendix 2.

Outcome: Members discussed and noted the Standards and Frameworks Commissioning paper.

169/08 ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023

██████████ introduced paper AC169/08 and asked Members if they were content with the work plan for 2023.

Members asked for the following to be included in the work plan for 2023:

- Update on education reform
- July meeting – common/regular themes with audit and provider monitoring Issues
- Update on regulatory activity planning (in relation to how may face to face visits to be undertaken in the next cycle)

Outcome: Members discussed and approved the Accreditation Committee Work Plan 2023.

Action: ██████████ to update the work plan 2023 with the above items.

169/09 SQA ACCREDITATION STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

Mr Brown introduced paper AC169/09 and updated Members on SQA Accreditation Stakeholder Survey Action Plan.

Members were informed that discussions are ongoing with Business Systems as to how SharePoint can be modified so that the Accreditation Licence, Schedules and Approved Structures can be uploaded along with the awarding body's risk score.

Members discussed what form of communication is used and how effective this is. Members were informed that a monthly newsletter is published and specific information for accountable officers is emailed out when required. It was agreed that, at the Awarding Body Forum, stakeholders will be asked how they would like us to engage with them. Mr Brown will discuss our way of communicating with the corporate communications department.

Outcome: Members noted the SQA Accreditation Stakeholders Survey Action Plan.

Action: Mr Brown will discuss with the corporate communications department ways for engaging with stakeholders.

Action: ██████████ will discuss ways of engaging with stakeholders at the next Awarding Body Forum in November.

169/10 ACCREDITATION DECISION LIST REPORT

██████████ introduced paper AC169/10, drawing Member's attention to those qualifications that had been accredited from 1 July 2022 until 30 September 2022.

The paper provided a summary of decisions made by the Accreditation Coordination Group (ACG) between these dates.

Outcome: Members noted the contents of the paper.

169/11 PROPOSED ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DATES 2023

██████████ introduced paper AC169/11, advising members of the scheduled Accreditation Committee meeting dates for 2023.

Outcome: Members noted the dates.

Action: [REDACTED] to circulate the final dates out to members.

169/12 AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE BOARD

Noting that the education reform process was an ongoing issue for the SQA Board, it was agreed that there were no new items from the meeting to be raised the Board.

169/13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

169/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next Accreditation Committee meeting: Wednesday 18 January 2023 at 1000 hours via MS Teams.