

Minutes of the 39th SCQF Partnership Board held on Friday 1 September 2017 at 09.00 hours in the SCQF Partnership Conference Room, 201 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 2LW

Confirmed

Present:

Rob Wallen (RW)	Chair SCQF Partnership
George Brown (GB) (Representing Janet Brown)	SQA
Rowena Pelik (RP)	QAA Scotland
Jim Metcalfe (JM)	College Development Network
Alastair Sim (AS) Joined meeting via Skype	Universities Scotland
Paul Smart (PS)	Scottish Government
Bernadette McGuire (BMcG)	Chair of SCQF Partnership Quality Committee

In Attendance:

Aileen Ponton (AP)	SCQF Partnership
Sheila Dunn (SD) from Item 7 to 15	SCQF Partnership
Lorna Meiklejohn (LM)	SCQF Partnership (Minutes)

Welcome and introductions

RW opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees to the meeting. He explained that AS was joining the meeting via Skype. As this was being operated by sound only, he asked that everyone around the room introduce themselves as being present.

Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Janet Brown of SQA with George Brown attending as her deputy. Liz Cameron from Scottish Chambers of Commerce had also submitted apologies.

Register of Interest

RW reminded Directors of the Register of Interest form that was included with the papers and should there have been any changes to their status, they should complete the form and pass to LM.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 02 June 2017

RW drew the Directors attention to the minutes held on 2 June and the slightly abbreviated version for the website. No changes were intimated

It was agreed that this was an appropriate record of the meeting. RW thanked SD for stepping in at the last minute and attending to the business in the absence of AP. He welcomed AP back to her duties from her recent absence. One amendment was agreed to the website version of the minutes.

2. Matters Arising

AP spoke to this paper and stated that under Item 2, she was delighted to report that we had a Modern Apprentice in place who had joined us as Administrative Assistant at the beginning of July, having just left school. She is undertaking an SCQF Level 6 MA in Business and Administration.

Moving to Item 9, AP asked Directors to note the updated Framework Diagram now in place on the Boardroom wall, showing the Graduate and Higher Apprenticeships in the final column. This had been agreed with Skills Development Scotland and the Board. One issue still outstanding was in relation to the future of the Professional and Technical Apprenticeships. An SDS consultation was due to take place and a decision on this was expected within the next 6 months.

3. CEO Report

AP introduced this paper and asked Directors to note the various developments in the report. She highlighted the Living Wage accreditation for the Partnership that had now been approved. The application to the Glasgow Guarantee for financial support for the MA post had also been approved. Part of the contribution to the MA's salary would be in this financial year with the remainder in the next financial year.

The outcome of the work to support Universities using SCQF to support Government priorities was highlighted separately on the agenda. However the Scottish Funding Council had agreed to SCQFP expanding the offer this year to support up to 6 organisations, both Colleges and HEIs. The Closing date for applications for this was 2 October 2017.

AP then gave an update on the Pineapple Report, where it had been agreed with the Refugee Council and Scottish Government that a modelling up of a pilot programme would be taken forward. SCQFP would continue to support that work with Scottish Government colleagues.

BMcG sought clarification on the income which would be generated via the successful bid for the European funding to look at RPL – D'Ahoy. This was a European project involving 5 countries looking at the development of decision making competences for those working in the maritime sector. City of Glasgow College was the other Scottish partner. AP explained that the project would only commence on 1 October 2017 and would run for 3 years. The first Steering Group meeting would be held on 9 October at City of Glasgow College. It was anticipated that the final budget would be made available for that meeting and this could then be incorporated into the budget forecast for 2017-18. The Directors noted all of the developments on the report.

4. Update on School Ambassador Project

AP gave Directors some further insight to the work on the School Ambassador Project supported by an Associate, who had been engaged up until March 2018. Directors had been given an update at the June Board meeting and they had requested a fuller paper to be produced under this item. The Overview showed 20 schools taking part with a further 3 schools waiting to be trained. A formal MoU had been drawn up showing how the schools benefited and how it gave exposure to the SCQF. A competition has been organised and the successful individual/school would be announced at the Conference in February 2018. AP reported that discussions had started with CDN to look at possible Ambassador Colleges as a pilot scheme. The Directors noted the progress to date.

5. The Learner Journey Review

AP introduced this paper on behalf of Julie Cavanagh. AP asked the Directors to note the progress of the review and sub-projects in particular. The SCQF Partnership had been involved in 3 of the projects commencing in June 2017, with a deadline to submit evidence and recommendations by 31 August 2017. She noted that the timescales were tight and that there was also considerable overlaps between strands of work. PS agreed that there had been replication of some of the coverage but indicated that in some cases this was seen as beneficial as it allowed consideration

of an issue from different perspectives He was hopeful of some constructive recommendations which were both realistic and achievable.

The Directors discussed the current position given that most of them had also been involved in the Review from the perspectives of their own organisations. PS offered to provide a member of his team to attend the December Board meeting to give an update on progress with the report and emerging recommendations. Directors confirmed that this would be very useful.

6. Draft Conference programme

AP introduced this paper setting out the main themes for the conference, speakers and proposed workshops. The Directors discussed the contents of the draft agenda and workshop plan and reviewed the proposals included within the paper. The Directors asked that consideration be given to geographical spread in terms of showcasing best practice whilst accepting that we could only use speakers where there was a very positive outcome to share.. The Directors confirmed their agreement to all of the proposals and noted the dates for their diaries in order to attend the Conference and Dinner.

7. Bahrain referencing proposal

AP introduced this paper setting out a proposal from the Education and Training Quality Authority (formerly QQI) of Bahrain to reference the BQF and the SCQF. She explained that there was an existing MoU and that there was a previous proposal to undertake this work in 2012-13 which the Board had decided not to support but had agreed to continued working and co-operation. Since then much work has been done to populate the BQF including the development of amended processes and procedures and the embedding of a robust quality assurance system. Given that many of the qualifications offered in Bahrain are UK qualification ETQA would like now to seek a full referencing to the SCQF to make some of those recognitions smoother and to promote the robustness that referencing to another very established framework provides. AP suggested that this would not be an extensive piece of work for the SCQFP and it could draw upon some of the work undertaken to reference to the HKQF. She proposed that the approval process would be managed by the Quality Committee and that a final report would brought back to the Board in the first Quarter or 2018.

The Board approved the proposal on that basis.

8. Management Accounts 2017 -18 Quarter 1

AP highlighted some of the items shown on the paper provided, in particular the fact that the Board had previously agreed to show the reserves spend and the deferred income in the budget income line. ARC had asked that these be moved to the end of each spreadsheet so that it was made clearer that the position for the year was not profit but loss for the year.

AP confirmed that some of the income detailed in the budget report was additional to that forecast for the year.

The Auditors had requested that the Accountants add their confirmation of the bank reconciliation as a note on the accounts, as reassurance to the ARC and the Board. AP confirmed that this has now been done each month.

The Directors approved the Management Accounts.

9. Report from the Audit & Risk Committee

AP spoke to this paper and she highlighted the changes to the Risk Register that had been requested by ARC. Although the Scottish Funding Council had provided a 3 year letter of comfort with regard to funding it was felt that this should still remain on the risk register as funding each year was not formally guaranteed. The Directors considered and approved the updated Risk Register.

The Board had asked about moving some of the funds to another bank account. JM had provided some information which was discussed at ARC. AP indicated that the banks were all relatively similar in terms of interest rates but had suggested three possible accounts for consideration. AS confirmed that splitting between banks would be better and it was agreed that AP would do a little more scoping and then agree a final decision with RW. The Directors noted this and the other items of business from the minutes of 10 August.

10. Report from the Quality Committee

BMcG introduced this paper with the report from the Quality Committee, being her first meeting as the Chair. She highlighted the two presentations with detailed information which had been made at the last meeting. One of them presented the work that the Schools Ambassador project covered and the other was an overview of the QA model by SD which reminded all members of their role in the process

SD added that as a result of advertising for External Reviewers 16 applications were received. Interviews were scheduled and the plan would be to have a number of these trained on 6 October and available to take up a reviewer role thereafter.

Directors noted the range of business conducted by the Quality Committee.

11. Annual report 2016-17

AP had provided Directors with a final draft copy of the Annual Report at the meeting. The format had been revised with less text, more visual representations and a number of infographics. A foreword had been provided by Shirley Anne Somerville. Directors were very pleased with the report and thought that it sent out very positive messages about the work of the SCQFP. JM proposed that in order to reinforce the "partnership" approach it would be worth looking at the back page of the report as a way of highlighting all of those partners who had contributed to work during that year.

The Directors agreed with this suggestion and approved the report on that basis.

12. Reports from HEI projects 2016-17

SD introduced this paper highlighting the final reports from the HEI funded projects. All of the 3 programmes have been credit rated and uploaded to the SCQF database with the Level 12 being the first qualification at that level apart from PhD. The Directors found the reports extremely useful as well as easy to read and thought the messages in these were very positive about the work and the support of the SCQFP. SD reminded Directors that as indicated earlier the offer for this year was being extended to colleges in addition to HEIs and would be for 6 projects rather than 3. The Directors noted the content of the reports.

13. Review of policies and procedures

AP reported that she had instigated a review of all policies to ensure that the organisation had a complete log of these and had scheduled in appropriate dates for reviewing them. In relation to this with an HR focus she had contracted with our HR adviser to do these and this had been budgeted for. In addition there were others which related to finance, governance and processes. A number of them would need Board approval over the next 3 meetings. These had been also been discussed at ARC prior to coming to the Board. Directors asked whether the HR policies included Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity. AP assured them that they did.

After discussion there were a couple of additional policies which the Board felt should come to it for approval given its governance role and AP confirmed that she would update accordingly.

The Directors noted the work being undertaken and those policies which would come to the Board and other committees or groups for approval.

14. Any other business

RW reported that there was a potential issue with the continuation of one of the co-opted Directors due to work commitments. He was continuing discussion and would update at the next meeting.

15. Date of next meeting

Friday 1 December 2017 at 9.00am