

Minutes of the 41st SCQF Partnership Board held on Thursday 15 March 2018 at 09.00 hours in the SCQF Partnership Conference Room, 201 West George Street, Glasgow, G2 2LW

**confirmed for website**

**Present:**

|  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Rob Wallen (RW)                              | Chair SCQF Partnership      |
| Gill Stewart (GS -Representing Janet Brown)  | SQA                         |
| Rowena Pelik (RP)                            | QAA Scotland                |
| Jim Metcalfe (JM)                            | College Development Network |
| Steve Hearty (SH)                            | CITB                        |
| Alastair Sim (AS) via phone link (Items 1-3) | Universities Scotland       |

**In Attendance:**

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Aileen Ponton (AP) Items 1-11 & 13-14    | SCQF Partnership           |
| Sheila Dunn (SD) from Items 1 -5 & 10    | SCQF Partnership           |
| Julie Cavanagh (JC) from Items 1-5       | SCQF Partnership           |
| Lorna Meiklejohn (LM) Items 1-11 & 13-14 | SCQF Partnership (Minutes) |

**Welcome and introductions**

RW welcomed all to the meeting. As it was SH's first meeting, everyone around the table introduced themselves.

**Apologies for absence**

|                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Bernadette McGuire | Chair of SCQF Quality Committee |
| Paul Smart         | Scottish Government             |

**Register of Interests**

RW reminded Directors of the Register of Interests form which was included with the papers. Should any interests of Directors have changed via work with the Board, the form should be completed and submitted to LM to record.

**1. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2017**

RW asked Directors if there were any amendments to the previous minutes. The Directors were satisfied that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting. They accepted the redacted version of these for the website.

**2. Matters Arising**

AP referred to Item 5 of the paper which was still in confidence. This referred to the potential move to SCQFP from Education Scotland for the responsibility for reviewing colleges as CRBs. The Board had supported this and this had been reported to the Scottish Funding Council. AP had provided a draft of the letter of guidance that had then been reviewed internally and was almost ready to be issued by end March with SCQF Partnership taking this duty on from 1 April 2018.

A pilot was proposed to run for 18 Months to 31 October 2019 to enable coverage of all Colleges. Directors noted the other matters arising.

### **3. CEO Report**

RW invited AP to update on the paper provided. AP referred to the second bullet point on joining the QQI Polices and Standards Committee and confirmed that a formal letter of invitation had now been received from the QQI Chief Executive.

AP confirmed that the International Study Visit that followed the Conference had taken place with 18 delegates from 13 countries, and included presentations from both Bahrain and Hong Kong on joint and shared activities.

AP referred to the request from the Scottish Funding Council and confirmed that funding had been approved to support the recommendation from the Veteran Commissioner's report on developing a model for better recognition of education and skills for veterans. This project would start on 1 April 2018 and complete by March 2019. The funding would be used to engage a consultant with a Forces background to support the mapping process that will be required..

RP commented that she was aware of some aspects of this work and knew that there were some challenges with RPL, as it was quite hard and resource intensive. If this mapping project could help with the admissions and remove the need for individual portfolios maybe with a letter and standard mapping this might be helpful. She also thought there might be some other opportunities to look at funding for a Summer School for example to bridge the process between the military life and future study. Directors agreed that this was a very useful piece of work for SCQFP to lead on.

AP then moved to highlight the latest advice from SG on public pay for Chairs with a proposed 2% increase. It was agreed that this issue should be discussed after the paper concerning pay for the staff of the organisation had been considered which occurred later in the agenda.

### **4. Reflections on 2017 -18**

JC and SD then gave presentations on the highlights of 2017-18 along with some of the challenges. Highlights included the Conference held in February 2018; the review of the website; the Learner Journey Review; the support for CRBs; the robustness of the quality assurance processes and European and international engagement. The challenges included employer engagement and the standardisation of quality assurance process in a growing market along with the impact of Brexit. A discussion with the Directors followed and some clarification and expansion was sought. RP suggested that given employer engagement was an issue for all of the partners it might be useful to consider an event hosted by the partners to discuss linking how Education and Employers interlink. RW asked that a proposal come to the June Board meeting developed by SCQFP Executive in discussion with partners.

### **5. Impact measurement indicators 2017-18**

AP invited JC and SD to comment on this paper. JC explained in more detail how the different measures were captured and analysed and also indicated those which the Executive felt did not add value and those which did. For example she suggested that the measure to review prospectus and websites for colleges and Universities was now not telling us anything new and was labour intensive to complete. JC suggested deleting this measure from the metrics with a view to keeping a watching brief in future. She also felt that the metric concerning how SCQF featured in DYW strategies/plans was not useful as these plans did not consider things in that way.

The Directors questioned whether some of the metrics around awareness and understanding were still required as the recent Conference had demonstrated the wide interest in SCQF. JM suggested that it might be more useful to see how many Colleges and Universities were engaging with the SCQFP. The Directors considered the remaining metrics and RW suggested that the Management

Team should edit the list as proposed and discussed and bring forward an updated version to the next Board meeting in June.

## **6. Board self-evaluation**

RW reported that he had received three replies from Directors on the Board self-evaluation and he would speak to two of the others and feed their information back to the Board. From the comments he received most of them felt they were operating effectively and were willing to give more of a contribution if requested. The general feeling was that their role with SCQF linked in with the issues and activities from their day jobs. It was agreed that the Board papers provided were excellent, and whilst there was sometimes some considerable detail in the papers, Directors felt that this enabled them to have informed discussions.

## **7. Management Accounts 2017 -18 Quarter 3**

AP highlighted a number of key variances which were set out in the papers provided. One of them being that the final payment which was due for the Macedonian project may not arrive until the next Financial Year although the work related to this FY.

The Directors discussed the Management Accounts and the reasons for the variances before approving them.

## **8. Operational Plan and Budget 2018-19**

RW invited AP to speak to this paper. AP highlighted a few of the key points from the plan including those activities which were core and those which were specific to 2018-19. This included an activity which would look at research and information gathering including GDPR but also reviewing all our products and services. AP proposed using "Adopt and Intern" to engage someone to undertake some of that work. The Board considered the full draft operational plan for the year and were satisfied with all of it and noted that any international work that may arise at a minimum would cover the costs of that work.

AP then gave some explanations in relation to the draft budget pointing out the issue of the reserve spend and the additional income from Scottish Funding Council to fund the Veterans project and the Colleges review activity. The Directors discussed the planned budget. They considered the issue regarding spending of additional reserves coming from income during 2017-18 in order to support some specific areas of work. Directors approved the final draft budget including the spend of reserves.

## **9. Report from the Audit & Risk Committee**

RW reminded the Board that the minutes from the ARC meeting provided considerable detail of the business conducted within ARC and that this should enable Directors to be sure that things were working effectively, and he invited any points of clarification arising from the draft minutes of the ARC. Those that took part in the meeting were satisfied that this was an accurate record of the meeting held on 27 February 2018. The Board then approved the Audit plan provided by Henderson Loggie. The Board then discussed the amended Risk Register which included an added risk referring to GDPR. RP suggested that the Lobbying Register should be added and this was agreed. There were four other items on the register that had been downgraded which were approved by the Board. SH indicated that he was surprised not to see any reds within the traffic lights. Directors discussed this and felt comfortable about why this was the case. SH wondered whether there needed to be something more to differentiate between pre and post control and AP agreed that she would look at this. RW suggested that it would be useful to be able to distinguish any updated text from the previous version and asked that this might be shown in a different colour so that it was easier to spot change from one meeting to the next and this was also agreed.

The Directors discussed approved the Business Continuity Plan with one change being noted that SCEL were moving soon and a new place of work would need to be sought to replace this in the situation where evacuation was required.

The Directors approved the Policy on Appointment of Consultants. A discussion took place on the Review of Fees and clarity was sought on the Annual Monitoring fees having no charge. SD and RW explained the rationale behind this and it was agreed that they should remain non fee bearing. It was agreed to re-visit in March 2019.

The Directors approved the Financial Policies and Procedure document.

## **10. Report from the Quality Committee**

### **- City & Guilds Periodic Review Report**

SD referred to the minutes of the last meeting of QC and confirmed that work to support the recommendations from the Chief Nursing Officer on RPL within the NHS had been added to the operational plan for 2018-19. Directors noted the range of business carried out by the Quality Committee.

SD then drew the Directors attention to the additional paper on the City & Guilds Periodic Review Report provided. She summarised all of the outstanding issues, some of which had arisen when ILM gave up their Credit Rating status..

Having considered all of the detailed information, the Board agreed that approval to continue as a CRB should only be given for one year subject to a number of conditions and recommendations. They also agreed that a letter should go from RW as Chair of the Board to the Managing Director of CGLI setting this out

## **11. HR Policies reviewed**

RW confirmed that these policies had been developed with the aid of an outside HR expert. Both he and AP had read them all and were content. He invited any comments or questions from Directors before they agreed to approve all of the policies and confirmed that the suggested review date of February 2020 was timed appropriately, with an annual check of any changes to regulatory or legal requirements. AP confirmed that the Data Protection policy was still being finalised to take account of GDPR.

## **12. Any other business**

No other business was reported.

## **13. Date of next meeting**

RW confirmed that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 14 June 2018 at 9.00am.