

## section 5: the consultation questions

Please note that the Respondent Information Form **MUST** be returned with your response.

As indicated in section 3 – How to Respond, responses can be submitted on-line, or on a copy of the questionnaire printed from the website, or by cutting out and completing this section of the document. Additional paper should be used if you wish to provide more extended responses but please ensure that any such pages include your identifying details.

Name/Organisation: Woodfarm High School, English Department

### PROPOSAL 1

**National Qualifications at Access, Higher and Advanced Higher will be retained as points of stability.** Highers, in particular, will remain the 'gold standard' of the Scottish education system. The content of all National Qualifications will be updated to reflect the values, purposes and principles of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Some aspects of the structure of these qualifications will also be reviewed.

**Q1. Do you welcome the intention to update all qualifications at Access, Higher and Advanced Higher in line with *Curriculum for Excellence*? Please comment on any implications to be considered.**

YES

NO

Comment

Continuity + progression are highly desirable, and have been important features of all English courses since 1980s.

However there are considerations of:

- workload
- CPD
- resources

and as a consequence it is thought the courses should come onstream in a staggered implementation timescale.

## PROPOSAL 2

A new qualification will replace the present Standard Grade General and Credit levels and Intermediate 1 and 2 (SCQF 4 and SCQF 5) qualifications. The new qualification will be available in a wide range of subjects, as at present. The new qualification will reflect the best features of Standard Grade and Intermediate. Standard Grade Foundation level will be removed and Access 3 will provide certification at SCQF level 3. (See Annex A Table 1 for illustration of new qualifications on SCQF framework.)

**Q2. Early consultation has identified the 'best' features of Standard Grade and Intermediate qualifications as:**

- the 'inclusive' approach to certification contained in Standard Grade; and
- the 'unit based' structure of Intermediate qualifications.

Are there any other features in the present Standard Grade and Intermediate qualifications which should be included in the new qualification at SCQF levels 4 and 5?

Comment

*The progressive nature of the curriculum design from course level to level.  
The 'safety net' of S. grade assessment*

**Q3. One of the proposals is to grade units. Do you agree that units should be graded A-C rather than pass/fail?**

YES

NO

Explanation

- greater emphasis on grades contradicts the principles of AfFL.
- standardisation of unit assessment would be disproportionately time-consuming
- pressure to end-load all assessment & for further re-assessment from parents would increase.

Q4. Do you want graded units to count towards the final award?

YES

NO

Explanation

as at present, i.e. no full course award unless all units have been passed  
 or candidates may only be eligible to sit the external exam if  
 units have been completed successfully.

Q5. Which option for introducing compensatory arrangements would you most support?

Please tick one option or suggest an alternative.

- Option A Extend the range of grading in course awards to grade E.
- Option B Recognise unit passes only.
- Option C Compensatory award at the level of the course studied with no grade awarded.
- Option D Compensatory grade C award at the level of course below that studied.
- Option E Compensatory grade A award at the level of course below that studied.

Explanation/other suggestion

If courses are progressive the qualification at the level below  
 would be duplication.

Q6. The proposed name for the new award is General (SCQF 4) and Advanced General (SCQF 5). Please indicate if you are content with this suggestion. If not please offer an alternative and explain your choice.

YES

NO

Explanation/other suggestion

'general' sounds too mediocre

## PROPOSAL 3

**New awards in literacy and in numeracy will be available at SCQF levels 3 to 5.** *Curriculum for Excellence* brings a sustained focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills in our young people. To help strengthen this focus, the Scottish Government is proposing new separate awards to accredit young people's literacy and numeracy skills – the Scottish Certificate for Literacy and the Scottish Certificate for Numeracy. The awards will be available at SCQF levels 3 to 5. The expectation is that all young people will be presented for these awards unless there are exceptional reasons for not doing so. The intention is also to ensure that the structure of these awards is flexible enough to make them available to adult learners.

**Q7. Do you agree with the proposal to offer literacy and numeracy awards at a range of SCQF levels (3 to 5)? If not please offer an alternative.**

YES

NO

Explanation/other suggestion

*Worry that these literacy courses would be a disincentive to continue study of English, which would be a retrograde step for society & literacy.*

**Q8. National Qualifications at Access 3 (SCQF level 3) do not have an external examination. Do you agree that any new awards in literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 3 should have an external examination?**

YES

NO

Explanation

*to permit parity of esteem for candidates.*

**Q9. Should the weighting between the internal and external assessments for the literacy and numeracy awards be equal? If not should more weight be attached to the internal or external assessment? Please explain.**

- Equal weight
- More weight to internal assessment
- More weight to external assessment

Explanation

*• depends on when these assessments are set. If in S3, then internal assessment should be more dominant.*

**Q10. When should young people be assessed for literacy and numeracy awards?**

Please tick one option.

- Option A At the end of S3 as part of the summer diet of examinations.
- Option B In the December of S4 as part of a winter diet of examinations.
- Option C At the end of S4 as part of the summer diet of examinations.

Explanation

*• would provide a focus for three years of study*  
*• would avoid competition with English study in S4*  
*• would prevent pupils a staff confusion of courses if otherwise examined in S4*  
*• would stagger workload*

## PROPOSAL 4

**Increased flexibility to better meet the needs of young people. Suggestions include:**

- studying National Qualifications over 18 months (or 2 years) as well as one year;
- introducing a winter diet of examinations; and
- encouraging the most able young people to bypass lower level qualifications and to study Highers from S4 onwards.

**Q11. Do you agree with the proposal to allow the study of Highers and Advanced Highers over 12 months, 18 months and 2 years?**

YES

NO

Explanation

- have implications of timetabling + staffing been thought through?
- problems of a range of maturity studying one level of exam  
a difficulty in English
- if pupils failed in winter diet, problems of re-setting the course

**Q12. Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a winter diet of examinations?**

YES

NO

**Q13. If you agree with the proposal to introduce a winter diet of examinations, what subjects and levels of qualifications might first be offered?**

Suggestions

**Q14. Would you agree with changes to the system which allowed the most able students to bypass qualifications at lower levels and begin study for Highers from S4 onwards?**

YES

NO

Explanation

*· not suitable for English as skills + maturity need to be built up over time*  
*· problems of maturity · exam pressure + pace*

**Q15. Do you have any other ideas for increasing flexibility within the senior phase (S4 to S6)?**

Suggestions

*· perhaps some pupils require 2 years to study Higher*  
*· if there is progression between courses able pupils can be taught at a faster pace between S4 - S6.*

## TIMELINE

**Q16. It is intended that planning for the new curriculum should commence in 2008/09, with approaches based on the new curriculum introduced from school year 2009/10. This suggests that the new and revised qualifications and any increased flexibilities would be required from 2012/13 onwards to ensure smooth progression between the curriculum and qualifications. Is this indicative timeline realistic? Please comment on any implications to be considered.**

YES

NO

Comment

*We believe these changes must be phased in.*  
*In English we are dealing with new Outcomes, literacy award, new qualifications + changes to Access?, Higher + Adv. Higher and, as yet, nothing has been decided, in late 2008.*