

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: _____

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 but a rider NO

Comment due to the content & lack of information.

Allow to revise Highers - to allow more standardisation of equivalences
 Articulation with new courses and there is NO content to compare - present Intermediate courses do not articulate.
Cannot comment without the content.
 Happy with structure & exam procedures but content of Higher Human Biology.

needs a review of degree of difficulty of Human does not compare with H Biology

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

EFFECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

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

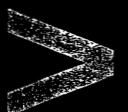
Practical areas should be included in appropriate subjects.
 Emphasis for internally assessed, ^{practical} should be assessed by the external exam.
 Knowledge & Problems solving should link more with abilities taught in English & maths.

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

Materials provided centrally so national testing.



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

YES

NO

Explanation

Open to abuse - subjective, assistance levels, parental pressure, number of resits, workload. / cross marking, quality of assurance

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

Validity of other options - credibility of other courses lost!

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

Confusion with existing Standard Grade Working Group needed associated with Scotland.

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 because of the the below concerns.

Explanation/other suggestion

Methodology - who collates, who is responsible,
 Workload.
 Content, validity, fairness.
 What happens if don't pass??
 Additional supports Needs Entitlement!

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

If any credibility it must be external exam.
 Internal open to parental pressure and abuse.



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

See previous explanations.

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

Valid judgement for those leaving school for employers etc.

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

Wouldn't be 12mths. still race.
 Who decides on who moves to H - what is safety net. - Parental pressure.
 Who decides when they sit. & what?
 Emphasise the sexual difference in maturity levels.
 Exams cost / number of papers needed.
 School areas out of action - cost of invigilators.

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

How do we identify pupils? - Tests.
Disadvantage late developers. Open to external pressures. What is the safety net?
University expectations?

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

Suggestions

too vague. - subjects / core subjects
e.g. PE, RE, PSE etc. included?

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

Too many changes. at one time changes to S1-3 then senior school.
No content available for staff to prepare for August 09.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

- National Development Teams? or does each school re invent the wheel.
- Concern over 5 subjects at such an early age.
- Diversity was a strength of Scottish Education which has been admired by so many other countries.
5 subjects too narrow.
- S1/2 is seen as a problem area in school at present how will the courses enthuse pupils for 3 years in the future
- Course decisions have implications for career choices.
- Level decisions ^{are} critical to allow us to build successful learners and confident ~~learners~~ ^{individuals}.
- FE/HE entrance qualifications?
- Raise awareness with employers and stakeholders. - at present employers are still confused by Standard Grade, Intermediate.



ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

- Erosion of the division between primary & secondary educational
- Teacher workload implications especially when course descriptors are not yet available.
- It is recognised that teachers already work well over the 35 hour working week.

annex a: scottish credit and qualifications framework

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is the common language of education and training in Scotland. Each qualification is allocated a level according to how demanding the qualification is.

Table 1: Including Proposed New Qualifications

This table illustrates where the new qualifications may be included. Any changes will need to be agreed with the SCQF partnership following this consultation.

Table of main qualifications			
SCQF level	SQA National Units, Courses and Group Awards	Higher Education	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
12		Doctorates	
11		Masters	SVQ 5
10		Honours Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
9		Ordinary Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
8		Higher National Diploma Diploma in Higher Education	SVQ 4
7	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate Certificate in Higher Education	
6	Higher		SVQ 3
5	New Advanced General qualification (to replace Standard Credit and Intermediate 2) Literacy and Numeracy qualifications		SVQ 2
4	New General qualification (to replace Standard General and Intermediate 1) Literacy and Numeracy qualifications		SVQ 1
3	Access 3 Literacy and Numeracy qualifications		
2	Access 2		
1	Access 1		

* These qualifications are differentiated by volume of outcomes and may be offered at either level



Table 2: Existing Framework

Table of main qualifications			
SCQF level	SQA National Units, Courses and Group Awards	Higher Education	Scottish Vocational Qualifications
12		Doctorates	
11		Masters	SVQ 5
10		Honours Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
9		Ordinary Degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate*	
8		Higher National Diploma Diploma in Higher Education	SVQ 4
7	Advanced Higher	Higher National Certificate Certificate in Higher Education	
6	Higher		SVQ 3
5	Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade		SVQ 2
4	Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade		SVQ 1
3	Access 3 Foundation Standard Grade		
2	Access 2		
1	Access 1		

* These qualifications are differentiated by volume of outcomes and may be offered at either level

annex b: design principles for national qualifications

Qualifications arrangements should support the values, purposes and principles outlined in *Curriculum for Excellence*.

- 1 **Inclusiveness.** Arrangements must provide credible recognition of the achievements of all young people within a common framework. Young people will achieve different levels of performance and will progress in different ways: qualifications arrangements should reflect these differences, not create them.
- 2 **High standards.** Qualifications arrangements should support best practice in teaching, promoting deep and effective learning. The arrangements should encourage all young people to achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.
- 3 **Relevance.** Outcomes assessed within the qualifications system should be developed from and closely linked to the purposes of learning 3-18 and the four capacities (successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors). Outcomes should include 'vocational' alongside 'academic' in a way that enables them to be given equal value.
- 4 **Skills.** Qualifications should provide explicit recognition for all young people of assessed levels of competence in a small number of essential areas, including literacy and numeracy.
- 5 **Progression.** The arrangements should enable young people to build upon their prior understandings and capabilities and lay down firm foundations for future learning, employment and engagement in society as confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. Outcomes should be grouped into clusters which have their own integrity. These should enable young people to accumulate knowledge and skills, to make connections across areas of learning where appropriate, and also to progress. There should be rich opportunities for both 'lateral' and suitably-staged 'vertical' progression.

An important subset of achievements will be recognised in the form of qualifications in ways that are fit for purpose.

- 6 **Fitness for purpose.** Assessment methodologies should support and fit the purposes of the intended outcomes of learning. To do this they should make use of the diversity of techniques which can be used to gain evidence of performance. Assessment should be proportionate – neither over-burdensome nor too light-touch for the purpose.
- 7 **Fairness.** Young people's achievements and performances should be judged fairly. There should be safeguards to ensure that judgements made by teachers and other assessors are comparable and that they give a fair assessment against defined national standards.



- 8 **Credibility/Reliability.** The arrangements for qualifications should command confidence so that they will be valued by young people, parents, employers and further and higher education. They should confirm that a young person has achieved what would be expected at a particular level, and support predictions of future success.
- 9 **Usefulness.** Qualifications should serve the purposes expected of them by employers, further and higher education, parents, and young people themselves. They should be as easy to understand as possible.

Arrangements for qualifications for young people in the senior phase (S4 to S6) will form part of the overall framework of qualifications for lifelong learning in Scotland and should build on existing good practice.

- 10 **Age and stage.** The arrangements should take account of the needs of learners in the senior phase and recognise where these may be different from those of older learners. Expectations should take account of issues of maturity where appropriate. There should be nothing within the arrangements that encourages presentation for qualifications at an age earlier than is in the best interests of the young person.
- 11 **Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.** Each qualification should carry a credit rating and level within SCQF and enable young people to make further progress within the qualifications framework in a straightforward way.
- 12 **Building on good practice.** Developments should recognise and build on the principles and best practice of Standard Grade and National Qualifications.
- 13 **Structures.** Structures should support the achievement of the above aims. Where existing features are fit for these purposes they should continue to be used. Structures should be flexible and facilitate school/college collaboration.
- 14 **Feasibility/Deliverability.** Teacher assessment workload should be considered. The extent of changes should be carefully justified, evaluated and costed. Plans for implementation should take careful account of the capacity of SQA, local authorities and schools, LTS and other partners to deliver, should build on the work of *Assessment is for Learning* and should be supported by suitable continuing professional development.