

**SCOTTISH ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CREDIT AND ACCESS**

14-02-06  
Item 4  
Paper 40-03

**Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework: the way ahead post-March 2006**

**Purpose and recommendation**

- 1 This paper is provided in order to update SACCA on the discussions about the future arrangements for taking forward the SCQF and the key proposals concerning:
  - The establishment of a new national committee to oversee the SCQF
  - The establishment of a new national committee (of which SACCA would be a member) for taking forward a collective programme of actions to make use of the SCQF in widening access to lifelong learning.

**Background**

- 2 At its previous meeting, SACCA received a paper (39-06) on the next phase of work on the SCQF. In brief, the paper outlined how the work to date has been concerned in the main with the development and subsequently the implementation of the SCQF. The next phase of work would focus on:
  - working across all sectors to exploit the potential of the SCQF in supporting access to and participation in lifelong learning
  - formalising the partnership for maintaining the SCQF itself.

**Progress**

- 3 The arrangements for formalising the Partnership have progressed through further discussions between QAA Scotland, Universities Scotland; the Scottish Qualifications Authority and the Scottish Executive who together are now exploring the development of a joint Company the members of which would be the organizations listed above. Each organisation would appoint a director to the Board of the company. The Company would also establish a Quality Committee with the role of maintaining and assuring the SCQF, i.e:
  - The structure itself i.e. the structure and definitions of the framework itself, the concept of level and the levels descriptors, SCQF credit and its definition;
  - The SCQF Handbook on the use and application of the SCQF i.e. on credit rating; credit transfer, RPL, the use of the SCQF in describing programmes and learner achievement etc;

- The principles, criteria and processes that determine which bodies can operate/credit rate within the SCQF;
  - The principles, criteria and guidelines that determine if and how other national or international framework should articulate with the SCQF.
- 4 Importantly, the role of the Quality Committee would extend only to issues concerning the SCQF as a whole. It will not have any role in relation to the frameworks that sit within the SCQF. In the case of the framework for higher education institutions, this would remain as the responsibility of SACCA, reporting to QAA Scotland Committee.
- 5 The creation of a Company is considered to be the most suitable vehicle for not only formalising the partnership but also importantly, enabling the partnership to enter into contracts and employ the core team of SCQF Officers as a single entity (rather than the current practice in which one of the partner organizations takes on the task (and liabilities) of such contracts).
- 6 Each of the Partners is now in the process of taking the above proposals to its relevant formal authority.

#### **The SCQF in Supporting Lifelong Learning**

- 7 While maintenance and assurance of the SCQF itself requires a particular set of management arrangements, the wider agenda concerning the use of the framework in supporting lifelong learning should involve all sectors and organisations with key national interests and role in supporting lifelong learning.
- 8 To this end, the JAC should now focus its agenda on the use of the SCQF to support lifelong learning and its terms of reference amended accordingly (in practice there is unlikely to be a need for major amendment).
- 9 While the JAC could continue to provide advice on the maintenance of the SCQF the main focus of the JAC would be on developing and taking forward a collective programme of work to make use of the opportunities created by the SCQF to widen access and participation in lifelong learning such as:
- Sharing experience and approaches to using the SCQF, using credit transfer, the recognition of prior learning and the recognition of work-based learning;
  - Building clearly articulated structures of qualifications and programs of learning that articulate with one another and include clear routes for progression and credit transfer.

- 10 Work is beginning on the process of establishing the new terms of reference and any changes in membership of the JAC which is likely to adopt a new name more in keeping with its role of providing a collective means of organizations and sector working together in using the SCQF to support access and participation in lifelong learning.
- 11 A paper on the potential agenda and issues to be addressed through the collective work taken forward via the JAC is provided as paper 40-04.
- 11 For further information on any of the issues covered in this paper please contact David Bottomley ([d.bottomley@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:d.bottomley@qaa.ac.uk), 0141572 3420)