AAG

## Minutes of Meeting

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| **Date** | **05/09/2024** |
| **Time** | **10:00am-12:00pm** |
| **Location** | **MS Teams Call** |
| **Present** | Ruth Jennings (Chair), George Brown (Vice-Chair) – SQA Accreditation, Andrew McFarlane – ACS Clothing, Klaus Meyer – Education Scotland, Colin Young – Leonardo, Catherine Ferry– Scottish Government, Diane Mitchell – Fife College, Sheila Dunn - SCQF, Stuart McKenna – STF, Tommy Breslin - STUC, Terry Dillon – SDS, Nicola Conner - SDS |

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| **1.** | **Apologies & Guests** |  |
|  | Apologies  James McDonald – RBS  Alison Bucknell – FISSS  Alison Eales – QAA  Bethany Welsh – Balfour Beatty  Andy Sturgeon – Scottish Power  Matthew Barr – Glasgow University  Observers  Alison Grant – Domino’s Pizza  Guests  Keith Spalding – Skills Development Scotland  Cara Jones – CifA  Catherine Cartmell – HES  Abigail Kinsella – Skills Development Scotland  Heather Gibson – Scottish Government  Fiona Clements – Scottish Government  Sharon Wilton – The Workforce Development Trust  Stef Grzybowski – Police Scotland |  |
| **2.** | **Welcome & Previous Minutes** |  |
|  | RJ welcomed Alison Grant from Domino’s Pizza who will be joining the meeting as an observer and potential employee representative.  RJ updated the group that Andy Sturgeon will be stepping down as an employer representative and thanked him for his support during his time with the group. |  |
| **3.** | **Agriculture** |  |
|  | RJ highlighted and commended the hard work and tenacity of the Development Manager throughout this development.  GB confirmed that the assessment strategies and qualification structures have been approved with amendments, however, the SCQF credit rating has not been approved due to discrepancies in NOS units. TD confirmed that the development manager will address feedback from credit rating and resubmit to ACG for approval.  Members raised that the qualification structure for Agriculture Level 6 is difficult to understand and asked if it could be simplified or presented in a different way to provide more clarity for readers.  **Accreditation Manager and Development Manager to review the Agriculture L6 qualification structure**  Apprenticeship Approval Document  Members felt the overall tone of the AAD was quite negative, members also highlighted that they don’t feel they fully understood the rationale for an Agriculture apprenticeship through reading this document, therefore, members proposed to resubmit with an AAD per pathway to provide more clarity.  Amends required re SCQF terminology and references to Core Skills/NOS policy throughout.  **SD to send list of amends to NC**  Members would be interested in seeing more information on Fair Work regarding the gender split and actions taken in the industry. Members felt that there could be more included on positive action taken to address the gender balance.  Framework Documents  Members highlighted that in the ‘role of the apprentice’ section, it’s not the learning outcomes of the standards that are listed – it’s the titles. Members suggested amending this to just refer to outcomes.  Members flagged that the link to the list of accredited courses is not active. NC confirmed that this list is currently being clarified by industry and will be uploaded for AAG members to access as soon as it’s available.  Members requested that generic text in the Fair Work section is amended to payment of ‘at least the minimum living wage’ and is reflected in all apprenticeships moving forward.  GB confirmed that only the main mandatory qualification needs to be accredited by SQA. Members proposed rewording the other awards section, as use of ‘accredited’ and ‘SCQF credits’ can be misleading, particularly if not all courses are SCQF credit rated. Members added that the Level 6 framework contains SCQF levels for the first aid qualifications, these are missing from the Level 5 framework.  RJ asked for members to send any further comments or feedback to TD or NC after the meeting.  **Due to the above feedback, and amends required on the Qualification Products, the group did not approve this framework.** |  |
| **4.** | **Archaeology** |  |
|  | Cara Jones presented Stage Gate 1 submission for Archaeology self-funded apprenticeships.  Members queried the process for the Awarding Body, CJ confirmed that CIfA are the Awarding Body in England, however, are committed to following the process to become approved by SQA Accreditation to be able to develop and deliver the qualification in Scotland. CJ confirmed that they will be engaging with other Awarding Bodies to ensure they are given the opportunity to pick this up.  Members questioned potential numbers for this apprenticeship, CJ confirmed numbers approx. 15 per year to begin with but hope to build on this as the apprenticeship becomes more embedded in the sector.  Members highlighted that more than one Awarding Body can pick up a qualification so there wouldn’t be any conflict of interest there. Members also highlighted for information that SVQs don’t involve end point assessment, they are assessed throughout.  Members queried union involvement, CJ highlighted that Prospect have been heavily involved in past work, CJ added that there are conversations ongoing and confirmed that they will be invited to the TEG.  TB will pass on details of any additional union contacts.  GB flagged that Awarding Bodies are required to submit an application to become an approved awarding body and a qualification submission at the same time, therefore CIfA will need to align their timelines with this process – GB advised that CIfA start discussions with SQA Accreditation to start the approvals process now.  SD offered support with regards to preparation for Credit Rating activity.  SD to pass on training dates and additional info to support credit rating activity to NC.  RJ praised the governance approach and how it allows members to support developers throughout their development.  CJ and CM highlighted the amazing support from SDS colleagues Keith Spalding and Nicola Conner – members echoed this praise.  Members praised the amount of enthusiasm from Cara, Catherine and the sector, and are looking forward to seeing this apprenticeship progress. |  |
| **5.** | **Social Work** |  |
|  | Heather Gibson, Fiona Clements and Abigail Kinsella presented stage gate 0 submission for a Graduate Apprenticeship in Social Work  Members questioned whether NOS would make up the qualification – FC confirmed that SSSC have the rights for standards in Scotland as the regulatory body. Members asked how this project will be running alongside the recent NOS contract awarded to SSSC, and whether this will impact timelines. AK will return with clarification and confirmation on these points at the next AAG meeting.  AK to come back to next AAG meeting with confirmation on usage of NOS within the Graduate Apprenticeship in Social Work.  Members raised concerns over the tight timelines. Members highlighted that it is important for development team to take on board lessons learned from the recently approved ODP GA. TB added that unions need to be engaged in this process and offered to facilitate the discussions with the relevant unions.  Members praised the enthusiasm within the sector, acknowledging that this is an additional route for Social Work, and that employer support is in place. Members are happy to endorse this development. |  |
| **6.** | **Custodial Care and Practice** |  |
|  | Sharon Wilton and Stef Grzybowski attended to discuss the Custodial Care and Practice development previously reviewed by AAG. This apprenticeship was reviewed in February 2024 and June 2024, and not approved by members due to the low level of Core Skills and lack of union support.  SG provided a robust overview of the requirements of employees within job roles associated with the Custodial Care and Practice apprenticeship. SG highlighted that a higher level of Numeracy would provide significant challenges to apprentices completing it, as a higher level of Numeracy is not naturally occurring in this role.  Members acknowledged that Core Skills should be naturally occurring – and following this discussion, understand that numeracy is naturally occurring in this role at Level 4. Concerns have been previously raised over the balance between apprentices undertaking learning which supports their job role, and having access to development opportunities, however if use of simulation is required to allow apprentices to achieve a higher level of Core Skills, this will create more challenges and barriers to completion.  **Members happy to support Numeracy at SCQF Level 4.**  Members flagged concerns with Scottish Prison Service and Prisoner Officers Association, who have met recently, and the POA voted unanimously against the apprenticeship, as they don’t believe it will address the current issues in the workplace. As a result of this discussion – TB is not comfortable to support this development.  Members questioned whether support from industry can be negated by one organisation who isn’t in agreement.  TB will work with Sharon and Prisoner Officers Association to review content and understand next steps.  MG will go back to SDS NTP to understand current allocation of starts |  |
| **7.** | **Development Manager Update** |  |
|  | Land and Nature  SQA have not approved the Business Case for this development due to low uptake. This is currently escalated to senior management, and colleagues from Nature Scotland are pulling together a paper to support the development. Members agreed that this should be escalated to SAAB Standards & Frameworks as an inform and for advice.  There are concerns from colleges as there will now be no apprenticeship provision in this space, and it is a very important sector.  Trees and Timber  This is currently paused while work is going on regarding NOS development.  Bring discussion regarding risks to apprenticeship development and how low uptake of qualifications may impact these moving forward.  Update Services/Hospitality with text regarding Fair Work and the minimum wage. |  |
| **8.** | **AOB** |  |
|  | AOB items will be taken offline for discussion |  |

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| **Outstanding Actions from Previous Meetings** | |
| **Action** | **Owner** |
| AAG Members to attend TEGs in an observatory role. | MG |
| Continuous Improvement Activity Update **September 2024** | TD |

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| **Apprenticeships Approved for Delivery (Stage Gate 4)** | |
| **Name of Apprenticeship** | **Date Approved** |
| Services (Customer Service, Retail and Travel) at SCQF Level 5 | 05/09/2024 |
| Services (Customer Service, Retail and Travel) at SCQF Level 6 | 05/09/2024 |