

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
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Douglas Ross MSP
Convenor
Education, Children and Young People Committee

BY EMAIL

2 October 2025

Dear Convenor,

I am writing to advise that I have announced to Parliament today, by way of a GIQ, further details relating to the establishment of both Qualifications Scotland and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland (HMIE), following the passage of the Education (Scotland) Act.

I can confirm that both Qualifications Scotland and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland (HMIE) will begin the process of establishment and operation from the end of 2025.

Implementation of the Education (Scotland) Act is supported by a Scotland Act section 104 Order (SAO) to be passed by the UK Parliament. Based on current information, we expect this to be completed before the end of this calendar year, though this is subject to UK Parliament timetabling.

Qualifications Scotland will be established as a legal entity on 1 December 2025, with Shirley Rogers appointed as Chair and the Board being established by transitioning selected current members of the SQA to Qualifications Scotland and the recruitment of new members. Recruitment of members to the Learner and Teacher Interest Committees and the Strategic Advisory Council will also begin in December.

In line with the above, I would also like to inform the Committee of my intention to lay The Qualifications Scotland (Appointment of Initial Members) Regulations 2025 on 6 October 2025, under the power in Schedule 3, paragraph 5(2) of the Education (Scotland) Act 2025 ("the Act"). The instrument will formally name seven members of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Board who are to be taken as appointed to the Board of Qualifications Scotland. This approach delivers on the provisions that the Scottish Parliament agreed during the Act's passage.

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From 1 November 2025, HMIE will begin its independent establishment, pending the passage of the SAO by the UK Parliament. During this time, HMIE will operate increasingly independently as part of Education Scotland, with a new website and business support functions and will begin to develop and establish its Advisory Council. Subject to successful recruitment, a substantive appointment to the role of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland will also be confirmed during this period.

The focus for both bodies during this process will be to ensure continuity of service and to establish critical business functions in accordance with the legislation. This will ensure they are ready to deliver meaningful change which puts our children, young people, and adult learners, their teachers, practitioners and school leaders at its heart once they are fully operational.

I will of course keep the committee updated of developments to implement the provisions in the Education (Scotland) Act 2025

JENNY GILRUTH

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