

Our ref: Chair
03 February 2026

Contact: Shirley Rogers CBE

Education, Children & Young People Committee Members

By email to: ecyp.committee@parliament.scot

Dear Committee members,

I'm delighted to confirm that Qualifications Scotland became fully operational on 1 February. I thought it would be helpful for me to update you on some key areas of progress and outline our immediate priorities.

The Education (Scotland) Act 2025 represents your determination to ensure Qualifications Scotland is a significantly different organisation in comparison to its predecessor. I share your determination, and I have been clear throughout my tenure as Chair that the new organisation must be different and must feel different for learners, educators and the many others that we are here to serve. I know that Nick Page, our Chief Executive, is equally determined to deliver that change.

Immediate priorities

As work gets underway, we have set out our priorities for the coming months as published in our [Business Plan – Accelerating Change](#). Our immediate pledge to learners and educators is to:

- Progress our work on qualifications reform including early engagement on plans to place less reliance on high-stakes exams in several subjects.
- Recruit learners, educators and other stakeholders to sit on new advisory groups, opening up Qualifications Scotland so they can get involved with shaping our decisions regarding our qualifications and services.
- Appoint four classroom teachers to bolster the newly formed School Partnership Team, which will build stronger relationships with schools and provide learners, teachers, parents and carers with more opportunities to have their voices heard.

Qualifications Scotland Board and wider governance

Last week the Scottish Government announced the [inaugural Qualifications Scotland Board](#), which will provide oversight and strategic direction to the new organisation.

The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, Glasgow, G2 8DQ
An Togalach Optima, 58 Sràid MhicDhonnachaidh, Glaschu, G2 8DQ

Lowden, 24 Shawfair an Iar, Dal Chè, EH22 1FD
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Chair: Shirley Rogers CBE

Chief Executive: Nick Page

I welcome the appointment of our new board members. Their hands-on experience of delivering qualifications, their experience of achieving qualifications and their understanding of the importance of qualifications in providing Scotland with the skilled workforce it needs will be invaluable. This breadth of representation will help us align with the needs and expectations of those we serve.

The Education (Scotland) Act 2025 sets out the establishment of two Interest Committees – one for learners and one for teachers and practitioners. [Recruitment for these committees opened yesterday.](#)

The Interest Committees will advise Qualifications Scotland on how qualifications – and the policies and processes that support them – operate in real settings, from studying qualifications to what it is like for schools, colleges, training providers and employers to deliver them. Members of the committees will share their own experiences and opinions to inform thinking, influence decisions, and shape future developments in qualifications and assessment.

Once established, these committees will develop a Learner Charter and an Educator Charter for us, which will set out what these groups can expect from Qualifications Scotland.

In addition, the Scottish Government will shortly be recruiting stakeholder representatives to join the new Strategic Advisory Council, which will advise on functions across education, skills, and the economic system.

Together these groups represent a significant shift in how the organisation is led and held accountable, with learners and educators much more involved.

Accreditation

There was considerable focus on accreditation during the passage of the Act, and two important appointments have recently been made to strengthen the independence of the accreditation function within Qualifications Scotland:

- The Cabinet Secretary has appointed Dr Ken Thomson OBE DL as Convener of the Accreditation Committee. As you will recall, the Act established that the Convener would be directly appointed by Ministers and that the Committee would act independently of Qualifications Scotland. Dr Thomson is a retired college principal who will bring a significant depth of knowledge and experience to the role.
- Following a thorough external recruitment exercise, Dr Liz Barron-Majerik MBE has been appointed as Chief Accreditation Officer and will commence this role on 9 March. This role was established in law by the Act and will be directly accountable to the Accreditation Committee. Dr Barron-Majerik is currently Scotland Director at Lantra, one of the leading awarding bodies for land-based industries in both the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

These are important appointments but are not the only steps being taken. Further work is underway to ensure that: the accreditation function, while remaining within Qualifications Scotland, is a demonstrably independent part of the organisation; and the quality assurance of National Qualifications is strengthened significantly with the establishment of an Expert Group on Qualifications Standards.

Qualifications reform

Our qualifications are at the heart of what we do. The breadth of our offer, including vocational and technical qualifications, enables us to equip school, college and lifelong learners with the knowledge and skills to fulfil their potential.

Over the next few years, we will reform our qualifications to ensure they are fit for purpose in a modern, flourishing Scotland. Changes will be made in collaboration with learners and educators, and the new School Partnership Team will play a vital role by building stronger connections with classrooms.

Led by seconded headteacher Sarah Brown, the team is bringing the organisation closer to the classroom and improving support for teachers and learners across Scotland.

Their role is to ensure that teachers' voices are heard and that changes to qualifications are relevant, inclusive and fit for purpose. Sarah has been visiting schools to hear direct from teachers and learners and using what she hears to inform next steps.

Work is also underway to develop equivalent partnership approaches with colleges, employers and training providers.

I hope the progress and immediate priorities I have outlined above reassures you that we are working hard to deliver the will of Parliament, as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 2025, and also to go beyond that to ensure Qualifications Scotland delivers the change and transformation that the education and skills system requires and expects. Qualifications Scotland is not a rebrand – it is a hard reset.

We look forward to discussing these topics and anything else about Qualifications Scotland, with you at the Committee session on 11 March.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley Rogers CBE
Qualifications Scotland Chair