EDUCATION AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

AGENDA

7th Meeting, 2012 (Session 4)
Tuesday 28 February 2012

The Committee will meet at 10.00 am in Committee Room 2.

1. **Curriculum for Excellence**: The Committee will take evidence from—

   Dr Janet Brown, Chief Executive, Scottish Qualifications Authority;
   
   Larry Flanagan, Education Convener, Educational Institute of Scotland;
   
   Terry Lanagan, Executive Director of Educational Services, West Dunbartonshire Council, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland;
   
   Bill Maxwell, Chief Executive, Education Scotland;
   
   John Wilson, Director of Education, East Renfrewshire Council.

2. **National Library of Scotland Bill (in private)**: The Committee will consider a draft Stage 1 report.

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Clerk to the Education and Culture Committee
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The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

**Agenda Item 1**

Written Evidence

SPICe briefing

**Agenda Item 2**

Correspondence Received

PRIVATE PAPER
Curriculum for Excellence

The following written evidence was submitted to the Committee by the Scottish Qualifications Authority—

**Background**

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) represents a different approach to learning and assessment and in the way education is delivered in nurseries, primary schools, secondary schools, colleges, the workplace and the community.

This fresh approach to learning requires new assessment methods and qualifications to ensure continuity of learning and assessment from age 3 to 18.

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is developing the new qualifications which will have equal status and credibility to those currently available. These new qualifications will support the new curriculum and are built on the 3–15 curriculum experiences and outcomes.

The experiences and outcomes are organised into the eight curriculum areas (Expressive Arts; Health and Wellbeing; Languages; Mathematics; Religious and Moral Education; Sciences; Social Studies; Technologies) and describe what learners should achieve.

SQA’s role is to develop the new National Qualifications, to develop assessments, to maintain national standards and a robust quality assurance system, and to ensure young people’s results are certificated.

The new qualifications will help young people reach their full potential as they progress from their broad, general education through to college, university, other learning, and employment.

It is for education deliverers, including Education Scotland, local authorities and teachers — working with parents and learners — to decide what qualifications and how many should be taken in a particular year.

**What is changing?**

There will be new qualifications called National 4 and National 5. They will replace Standard Grade and Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2.

Access 1–3, Higher and Advanced Higher Courses will be revised to reflect the aims, values and principles of CfE and to provide good progression to, and from, National 4 and National 5.

The new Courses will use a new type of Unit — more skills-based, less prescriptive, and more user-friendly. These Units will require knowledge, understanding and skills. Their specifications will be more flexible and open. They will have fewer, broader outcomes that encourage holistic assessment, and will rely on assessors to exercise professional judgement instead of having to satisfy long lists of criteria. SQA will
quality-assure those judgements to ensure national standards have been met and that the credibility of the qualifications is maintained.

**When will the changes take effect?**
Pupils who entered S1 in 2010–11 will study towards new National Qualifications.

- 2013–14: new Access 1–3, National 4 and National 5 introduced
- 2014–15: new Higher introduced
- 2015–16: new Advanced Higher introduced

The table below lists the existing National Qualifications and shows how they equate to the new qualifications:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current National Qualifications</th>
<th>REPLACED BY</th>
<th>New National Qualifications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access 1 and Access 2</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>Access 1 and Access 2 (new)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access 3</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>Access 3 (new)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Grade (Foundation level)</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>National 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Grade (General level)</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>National 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate 1</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Grade (Credit level)</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>Higher (new)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate 2</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>Advanced Higher (new)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Higher</td>
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Individual schools will implement these qualifications in different ways, and we advise parents to check with their child’s school to confirm their final plans.

**Progress**
SQA is on schedule to publish the final specifications for the new qualifications, Access 1 to Higher, at the end of April 2012. Final specifications for Advanced Higher will be published in April 2013. This will include guidance on delivery and assessment.

Assessment support materials for Access 1–3, National 4 and National 5 will be available by April 2013, with materials for Higher following in April 2014 and those for Advanced Higher in April 2015.

To date, SQA has published over 600 draft documents, received over 2,500 Have Your Say comments from the education community, and involved over 1,100 individuals in the development of the new qualifications through representative development groups called Qualifications Design Teams and Curriculum Area Review Groups. We have also carried out a range of other focused engagements, including local subject networks, subject associations and engagement with learners on specific issues.

**Engagement and support**
SQA’s CfE Liaison Team was established in Autumn 2010 to provide information, support and guidance to schools, colleges and local education authorities on all aspects of the development of the new National Qualifications. The team is responsible for bringing feedback into SQA and dealing with any issues that centres
have throughout the development and implementation of the new qualifications. As well as working with schools, colleges and education authorities, the team has a role in ensuring other SQA centres, employers and parents have the information they need about CfE.

SQA has a package of support for schools, colleges and practitioners to help them implement the new National Qualifications. From May 2012, we will host a number of local and national implementation events, which will allow teachers and lecturers to discuss the final documents. The events will also outline the support available from SQA to deliver the new qualifications.

Throughout the development process, SQA has hosted meetings, seminars and workshops with stakeholders to discuss issues such as assessment, curriculum planning, quality assurance and continuing professional development. To ensure that each qualification is of the highest quality, our qualifications development process has been designed to be transparent, allowing for extensive consultation, while maintaining standards.

Throughout the development process we are publishing draft documents on SQA’s website for review and feedback.

**Transition**

From 2013–14, schools will be in a transition phase where both current and new qualifications will be available to meet the needs of all young people.

It is important that learners are supported. SQA’s current and new qualifications have been designed to ensure smooth progression from the 5–14 curriculum (for the current S3 upwards) and the new Curriculum for Excellence (for the current S1 and S2).

Therefore in 2013–14 and 2014–15, the current qualifications at Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher, will be available for young people in S5 and S6 who have followed the 5–14 curriculum. These will be available alongside the new qualifications.

The last certification of Standard Grades will be in August 2013.

The contingency arrangements announced by the CfE Management Board will be in place for one year only, to ensure the implementation of the new qualifications without any risk to young people’s education. Education Scotland is working with SQA and local authorities to identify the need for any additional support to ensure that we minimise the need to invoke the contingency arrangements. These contingency arrangements fit in with SQA’s established implementation plans and, in addition, make Intermediates available for those schools that have exceptional circumstances, as explained in **Education Scotland’s guidance letter** of October 2011.

This means that in 2013–14 the current Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 will be available in centres alongside the new Access 3, National 4 and National 5 qualifications. The last Standard Grade qualifications will be available in 2012–13. In 2014–15, Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and the current Higher will be available in centres alongside the new National 4, National 5 and new Higher qualifications.
The timetable for the development and implementation of the new qualifications has been publicly available for a number of years and SQA is on-track and meeting all programme milestones.

SQA continues to work closely with local education authorities as they prepare their senior phase plans. These discussions include gathering information on the number of presentations they will have for National Qualifications and how they intend to deliver them. This will inform SQA’s operational plans and ensure appropriate resources are in place, including the required number of markers and verifiers, to support the successful delivery of both the current and the new qualifications. During this work, we will flag-up any relevant issues to Education Scotland.

Education Scotland is co-ordinating the support needs of schools as they implement the new qualifications. Requests for support will need to be agreed by the appropriate Director of Education.

Information and support for teachers, parents and carers, employers and young people
Teachers — www.sqa.org.uk/ceforteachers
Parents and carers — www.sqa.org.uk/cfeforparents
Employers — www.sqa.org.uk/cefelleremployers
Young people — www.sqa.org.uk/cefelleryoungpeople
Jargon-buster — www.sqa.org.uk/jargonbuster
Myth-buster — www.sqa.org.uk/mythbuster
MyAlerts — www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts
Latest news — www.sqa.org.uk/cfenews
Developing qualifications — www.sqa.org.uk/qualificationsdevelopment
Introduction

The Committee will take evidence on 28 February 2012 on issues raised by the decision of East Renfrewshire Council to delay the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) qualifications from—

- East Renfrewshire Council;
- the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES);
- the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS);
- Education Scotland and
- the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

This paper outlines the timetable for introduction of the new qualifications, arrangements for providing extra support and the contingency plans outlined by Education Scotland which allow for delay in ‘exceptional circumstances’.

Timetable for introduction of new qualifications

The timetable for introduction of the new qualifications is outlined in the following table—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-10 and 2010-11</td>
<td>New curriculum introduced</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2012</td>
<td>Publication of new qualifications at levels 4 and 5 (National 4 and National 5) and revised qualifications at levels 1 to 3 and 6 (Access and Higher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>Last Standard Grades and publication of revised qualifications level 7 (Advanced Higher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>First new and revised qualifications at levels 1 to 5 (Access and National 4 and 5); ‘dual run’ with existing Access and Intermediates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>First revised qualifications at level 6 (Higher); ‘dual run’ with existing Access, Intermediates and Highers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>First revised qualifications at level 7 (Advanced Higher)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Scottish Government has asked councils to indicate by June 2012 whether they are able to meet the 2013/14 deadline (TESS, 10 February 2012).

The CfE Implementation Group was established in Autumn 2011. It is chaired by Bill Maxwell (Chief Executive, Education Scotland) and includes the SQA, the Scottish Government and ADES. It reports to the CfE management board which in turn reports to Ministers.
Bill Maxwell wrote to directors of education on 27 October 2011 stating that—

- there would be 300 “implementation events” covering all subject areas from May 2012;

- targeted support would be available for any secondary school which requires it. This might involve: “contact with a neighbouring department, enabling access to the SQA’s and Education Scotland’s support materials, and/or professional dialogue involving curriculum specialists, for example on progression from the broad general education and the experiences and outcomes”;

- contingency arrangements, for one year only, should be put in place for the very exceptional circumstances where a department is not ready to introduce the new national qualifications, National 4 and 5, for certification in 2013-14.

Mr Maxwell added that—

“These arrangements should only be considered where the targeted support arrangements described under 2 above, have been implemented but a department is not ready. Should the school, with the support of the Local Authority and, if appropriate, Education Scotland, consider that it is in the best interest of learners they can be presented for the relevant Intermediate qualification rather than the new qualification. This must be with the authorisation of the Director of Education and, given the range of support, it is anticipated that there will be very few occasions where it will be necessary to invoke these contingency arrangements”. (Letter from Dr Bill Maxwell to Directors of Education, 27 October 2011).

General education in S1 to S3

By delaying the new qualifications, East Renfrewshire Council also intends to continue to require pupils to make their qualification subject choices in S2 (known as the 2+2+2 model). However, Curriculum for Excellence is intended to provide a “broad general education” in S1 to S3 with subject choices being taken at the end of S3 (known as the 3+3 model).

Education Scotland is in the process of establishing which local authorities are planning to continue to require subject choice in S2. A spokesperson from Education Scotland said: “every school on 2+2+2 is going to be encouraged to change” (TESS, 10 February 2012). A poll by the Scottish Secondary Teachers’ Association (SSTA) found that nearly half of schools responding said they were operating the 2+2+2 model (TESS, 17 February 2012).

The CfE management board issued a statement on the senior phase in May 2011. Among other things, this outlined that, although qualifications wouldn't be studied until S4, there was scope for specialisation in S1 to S3, stating—

“while S1–S3 will be designed to provide a broad, general education, there will be scope for increasing depth and specialisation in particular subjects through choices made during that time. Although formal qualifications will not begin before S4, learning which takes place in the broad general education can and should contribute to the learning for qualifications. National curriculum levels attained will be recorded within the S3 profile and, of course, success in subjects not continued into the senior phase will also be recognised at the end of S3. Schools should bear in mind when planning the senior phase that it may be in the best interests of many of their
young people to bypass National 4/5 and begin learning for Highers in S4". (Curriculum for Excellence – The Senior Phase: A Statement from the Curriculum for Excellence Management Board)

Camilla Kidner
SPICe
14 February 2012
During my evidence session on 21 February I undertook to address some of the points made by members of the Committee in writing.

The Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) has the legal status of "applicable guidance" issued by the Scottish Ministers as referred to in the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 (specifically section 22(1)(c)). The SPFM sets out the public sector accountability standards required by the Accountable Officer of each public body, including NLS. More information about the legislative background of the SPFM can be found at—
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Finance/spfm/Intro

Members asked for more information about the charges that NLS currently applies. There are instances when NLS provide a charge to meet any additional “added value” costs it might incur. For instance whilst NLS provide most digitised material free of charge on its website they charge users for “digitisation on demand” when content has not been made electronic. Members of the public are charged for the production of high resolution maps if this is not available as part of NLS’s existing collections. This charge covers the cost of digitising. The charges applied for digital images are published on the NLS website at
http://www.nls.uk/using-the-library/copying-services/digital-imaging

As I made clear during my evidence session the essential point is that the Scottish Government is committed to free access.

Following the evidence session my officials were asked to clarify the relationship between section 8(2)(a) and (b), and schedule 1, paragraph 11(1) and (2). I understand that members would find it useful to understand whether the Ministerial power of direction could be extended to some of NLS’s general powers in some circumstances.

NLS must have regard to its functions when exercising any of its powers in schedule 1, paragraph 11 (1) and (2). The powers can in principle be directed on by Scottish Ministers, subject to the restrictions in section 8(2). A power of direction would only be used after careful consideration and as a means of last resort. Scottish Ministers would need to be satisfied that all other requirements and controls, as set out in the SPFM and the Memorandum to Accountable Officers, had been exhausted.

I can confirm that there has to date been no Ministerial power of direction given to a cultural public body.

Fiona Hyslop
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs
23 February 2012