

## **EDUCATION REFORM UPDATE**

### **Purpose**

1. To provide an update on the Education Reform programme.

### **Education Reform programme**

2. Progress continues to be made across the various elements of the Scottish Government's Education Reform programme. Specific areas of the programme are discussed in more detail below.
3. Each of the areas below are being developed via engagement with stakeholders and users across the education system.

### *National Discussion*

4. The insights and views of children, young people, parents, carers, and those working in education who took part in the National Discussion will inform the vision for Scottish education.
5. The Independent facilitators of the National Discussion, Professor Carol Campbell, and Professor Alma Harris will publish the vision for Scottish education and a call to action in the spring. This will be a vision for the future and the unifying plan driving change and reform.
6. In the more immediate term, the output from the National Discussion will influence wider ongoing reform activity, including work on the new national education bodies.

### *Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment*

7. Professor Louise Hayward provided the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills with the [interim report of the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment](#) on 3 March 2023. A final report is expected by the end of May 2023.
8. This provides an overview of the work of the Review so far and gives an indication of their preferred model.
9. During March, this model will be tested with schools, colleges, and other key stakeholders, ahead of a final report and recommendations being submitted to the Scottish Government for consideration at the end of May.
10. The Scottish Government will consider and respond to the final report and recommendations once these are received.

### *Purpose and Principles for post-school education, research, and skills*

11. Scottish Government has developed and is seeking views on an [interim purpose and principles for post-school education, research, and skills](#).
12. Engagement on the development of the Purpose and Principles will conclude towards the end of March 2023, with the aim of publishing a final a set of purpose and principles that reflect what we value and reach a clear position on where our collective future focus needs to be.

### *Independent review of the skills delivery landscape*

13. The report of this review, which is being led by James Withers, is anticipated later in the spring.

### *New National Education Bodies*

14. Draft strategic target operating models (TOMs) for the three new bodies continue to be developed, including to reflect input from the Education Stakeholder Reference Group on the role and work of the new inspectorate.
15. The draft TOMs will set out the options for the high-level functions and services to be delivered by each body.
16. The development of the TOM for the new national agency is currently focussing on key functions around Curriculum; Learning, Teaching and Assessment; and Professional Learning and System Leadership.
17. The development of the TOM for the new inspectorate is focussing on refining the options for what a successful inspection system could look like in a post COVID world. Both of these are expected to be completed around the end of April.
18. The draft TOM for the new qualification body is also being developed. This is likely to be to a slightly extended timescale to allow the inclusion of the regulation and accreditation functions in the new body and the interim report from the review of Qualification and Assessment to be considered and reflected.
19. As highlighted at the Education Reform Stakeholder Reference Group meeting in January, the next stage of work around the new national education bodies will include establishment of a User Panel to ensure this work is informed and challenged by individuals with diverse direct experiences of education in Scotland.
20. A programme website is being developed with an anticipated launch date before the end of April. This will be intended to be a comprehensive and accessible resource offering users and stakeholders throughout Scottish education with information and updates on the reform programme and how it will benefit those delivering and experiencing education.

21. The website will support the ongoing user and stakeholder engagement activity around the reform programme, including development of the new national education bodies, over the rest of 2023 and into 2024.
22. The Scottish Government has also launched the process for recruiting of a new Chair to lead the transition of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to a new qualifications body. The candidate will take over initially in September as SQA Chair when David Middleton leaves at the end of August when his current term of appointment ends.
23. Subject to Parliamentary approval of Scottish Government reform plans, the new chair will subsequently transfer to the successor qualifications body when it replaces the SQA.
24. Making the announcement, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills said:

“Visionary and resilient leadership is essential for the SQA and its successor organisation. It is my intention that the new Chair of the SQA will transfer to become Chair of the new body. This approach will provide new leadership during the crucial transition period, allowing the new qualifications body to take full advantage of the changes in culture and governance necessitated by the Scottish Government’s education reform programme.

“The reforms will also be shaped by the National Discussion, the findings of the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment and the Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape.

“I am very grateful to David Middleton for the skills, experience and expertise that he has brought to his role as SQA Chair. I have valued his leadership of the SQA’s board.”

#### *Education Reform Legislation*

25. The Scottish Government’s Programme for Government in September set out that an Education Reform Bill will be introduced before the summer recess.
26. The Bill will support the establishment of the new independent inspectorate and the new public body responsible for qualifications.
27. Stakeholder engagement around the legislation is being carried out, including via the Stakeholder Reference Group. Sessions with stakeholders representing Children and Young People and learner organisations, teaching unions, and wider local and national partners were held during the week commencing 13 March.

#### **Education Reform Programme March 2023**