

section 5: the consultation questions

Please note that the Respondent Information Form MUST be returned with your response.

As indicated in section 3 – How to Respond, responses can be submitted on-line, or on a copy of the questionnaire printed from the website, or by cutting out and completing this section of the document. Additional paper should be used if you wish to provide more extended responses but please ensure that any such pages include your identifying details.

Name/Organisation: *Rhonia on behalf of SSTA members in Drumchapel High School*

PROPOSAL 1

National Qualifications at Access, Higher and Advanced Higher will be retained as points of stability. Highers, in particular, will remain the 'gold standard' of the Scottish education system. The content of all National Qualifications will be updated to reflect the values, purposes and principles of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Some aspects of the structure of these qualifications will also be reviewed.

Q1. Do you welcome the intention to update all qualifications at Access, Higher and Advanced Higher in line with *Curriculum for Excellence*? Please comment on any implications to be considered.

YES

NO

Comment

*Higher still is still settling in - far too many changes over the last 20 years.
Is there a point to replacing 'general' at SQ to 'general' at ACfE - 'Advanced General' = credit - is this just a case of semantics?*

PROPOSAL 2

A new qualification will replace the present Standard Grade General and Credit levels and Intermediate 1 and 2 (SCQF 4 and SCQF 5) qualifications. The new qualification will be available in a wide range of subjects, as at present. The new qualification will reflect the best features of Standard Grade and Intermediate. Standard Grade Foundation level will be removed and Access 3 will provide certification at SCQF level 3. (See Annex A Table 1 for illustration of new qualifications on SCQF framework.)

Q2. Early consultation has identified the 'best' features of Standard Grade and Intermediate qualifications as:

- the 'inclusive' approach to certification contained in Standard Grade; and
- the 'unit based' structure of Intermediate qualifications.

Are there any other features in the present Standard Grade and Intermediate qualifications which should be included in the new qualification at SCQF levels 4 and 5?

Comment

Bearing in mind that you may have all levels of ability in one class, the Intermediate courses - where the difference is in the levels / amount of assessment, not in the course content should be retained.

Q3. One of the proposals is to grade units. Do you agree that units should be graded A-C rather than pass/fail?

YES

NO

Explanation

Internal assessment / grading is open to abuse
 Exemplification - detailed exemplification -
 required - same applies to verification.
 No grading at Access 3 level
 Not if only purpose of grading is for assessment



Q4. Do you want graded units to count towards the final award?

YES

NO

Explanation

But - how to avoid conflict of interest / parental pressure.
 NO path to grading unless count towards final award.

Q5. Which option for introducing compensatory arrangements would you most support?

Please tick one option or suggest an alternative.

- Option A Extend the range of grading in course awards to grade E.
- Option B Recognise unit passes only.
- Option C Compensatory award at the level of the course studied with no grade awarded.
- Option D Compensatory grade C award at the level of course below that studied.
- Option E Compensatory grade A award at the level of course below that studied.

Explanation/other suggestion

It can be demeaning to these pupils at 'compensatory' level below. Also danger that due to number of literacy difficulties, pupils put in to high level is the hope that at least would get compensatory level.

Q6. The proposed name for the new award is General (SCQF 4) and Advanced General (SCQF 5). Please indicate if you are content with this suggestion. If not please offer an alternative and explain your choice.

YES

NO

Explanation/other suggestion

Name is immaterial - pupils know the difference! Employers don't understand current system - Will G/AG make any more sense?

PROPOSAL 3

New awards in literacy and in numeracy will be available at SCQF levels 3 to 5.

Curriculum for Excellence brings a sustained focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills in our young people. To help strengthen this focus, the Scottish Government is proposing new separate awards to accredit young people's literacy and numeracy skills – the Scottish Certificate for Literacy and the Scottish Certificate for Numeracy. The awards will be available at SCQF levels 3 to 5. The expectation is that all young people will be presented for these awards unless there are exceptional reasons for not doing so. The intention is also to ensure that the structure of these awards is flexible enough to make them available to adult learners.

Q7. Do you agree with the proposal to offer literacy and numeracy awards at a range of SCQF levels (3 to 5)? If not please offer an alternative.

YES NO

Explanation/other suggestion

But - Access 3 not to be preserved - for many pupils its best point.
 What happens to pupils who fail literacy? He already knows who they are - why humiliate them further. This could be demotivating.
 - to help pupils, not label them

Q8. National Qualifications at Access 3 (SCQF level 3) do not have an external examination. Do you agree that any new awards in literacy and numeracy at SCQF level 3 should have an external examination?

YES NO

Explanation

We do not know yet if what this examination would consist
 literacy/numeracy is across all areas of curriculum - so who & how will this be assessed?
 What happens to those who fail literacy/numeracy?
 What exactly does a qualification in literacy/numeracy mean?



Q9. Should the weighting between the internal and external assessments for the literacy and numeracy awards be equal? If not should more weight be attached to the internal or external assessment? Please explain.

- Equal weight
- More weight to internal assessment
- More weight to external assessment

Explanation

Internal assessment is carried out over a long period of time - it is not dependant on one test paper.

Q10. When should young people be assessed for literacy and numeracy awards?

Please tick one option.

- Option A At the end of S3 as part of the summer diet of examinations.
- Option B In the December of S4 as part of a winter diet of examinations.
- Option C At the end of S4 as part of the summer diet of examinations.

Explanation

Confused - I'm sure I read that ~~there~~ there was to be no external examination in S3?
What about the 'core skills' awards pupils already receive on their SQA certificates.

PROPOSAL 4

Increased flexibility to better meet the needs of young people. Suggestions include:

- studying National Qualifications over 18 months (or 2 years) as well as one year;
- introducing a winter diet of examinations; and
- encouraging the most able young people to bypass lower level qualifications and to study Highers from S4 onwards.

Q11. Do you agree with the proposal to allow the study of Highers and Advanced Highers over 12 months, 18 months and 2 years?

YES

NO

Explanation

Nightmare scenario - especially for small depts.
 In one class - pupils in first year of one year H.
 Add in, as is the norm, pupils in #4 AH } " " second year of two year H.
 } pupils somewhere in the middle of this
 } pupils from SA/5/6 in one class.
 = Groups for performance in a practical subject would be impossible.

Q12. Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a winter diet of examinations?

YES

NO

Q13. If you agree with the proposal to introduce a winter diet of examinations, what subjects and levels of qualifications might first be offered?

Suggestions

Impractical for time-keeping of course construction. If they fail at 18 mths, do they get a chance to resit at 24mths. For practical exams - where do you get examiners for 2 lots of practical exams - how do schools manage to release V-E's time?



Q14. Would you agree with changes to the system which allowed the most able students to bypass qualifications at lower levels and begin study for Highers from S4 onwards?

YES

NO

Explanation

SA is peak time for Haywire learners - pupils need that year to mature. Big difference in pupils SA → S5.

Q15. Do you have any other ideas for increasing flexibility within the senior phase (S4 to S6)?

Suggestions

Over emphasis on college/university etc. not necessary for all. More vocational qualifications / experience needed. Pupils still unsure of what they want to study post school - let them try different career experiences to help them make up their minds.

TIMELINE

Q16. It is intended that planning for the new curriculum should commence in 2008/09, with approaches based on the new curriculum introduced from school year 2009/10. This suggests that the new and revised qualifications and any increased flexibilities would be required from 2012/13 onwards to ensure smooth progression between the curriculum and qualifications. Is this indicative timeline realistic? Please comment on any implications to be considered.

YES

NO

Comment

Very unrealistic. Consultation process not complete. Need exemplification of QI's, P.C's etc & new examinations before we can proceed.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

While we agree with the aims of ACFE, we feel it is being rolled in. Little thought has been given to the practicalities of the new qualification - as regards timetabling/classroom organisation / course structure etc.

The 3 year common course also needs exemplification.

One of the strengths of our current curriculum is the breadth of the curriculum in S3/S4 - pupils too young to choose only 5 courses in S4.

Will also have an adverse affect on discipline. By end of S2, boys in particular, have grown out of certain subjects and need to move on.

If they are 'contained' in a subject in which they no longer have an interest, they will disrupt.

We need - for this to succeed - more time, money, resources of teachers