

# Report

Report to:	<b>Education Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>6 September 2022</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Education Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessments in Scotland – School Participation</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to: -

- ♦ provide an update on the national Independent Review Group (IRG) on Qualifications and Assessment chaired by Louise Hayward, Professor Emerita of Educational Assessment and Innovation at the University of Glasgow

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s): -

- (1) that the Independent Review Group (IRG) on Qualifications and Assessment and their planned programme for school participation, engagement and timeline for reporting to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills by the end of March 2023, be noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills announced in October 2021 the intention to reform exams and national qualifications, to ensure learners' achievements are fairly recognised and to afford each of them an enhanced and fair opportunity to demonstrate the width, depth and relevance of their learning.
- 3.2. This decision was influenced by the recommendations in the OECD's independent review of Scotland's school curriculum, the debate around assessment following the cancellation of senior phase exams due to COVID-19, and the OECD paper by Professor Gordon Stobart setting out options on Scotland's future approach to assessment and qualifications.
- 3.3. Louise Hayward, Professor Emerita of Educational Assessment and Innovation at the University of Glasgow, has been appointed to act as a Convenor of the IRG and lead this review.

## 4. Phases of engagement

- 4.1. Professor Hayward intends taking forward an inclusive and participatory programme of stakeholder engagement with the aim of ensuring that those with a stake in the future of qualifications and assessments, including young people, have the opportunity to meaningfully feed into the Review.

- 4.2. There are three strands to Professor Hayward's planned engagement. The first is engagement through the IRG. Professor Hayward has appointed individuals to form an IRG who have a variety of skills and experiences including for example, teachers and young people, those involved in the design and delivery of qualifications, as well as representatives from the university, college and business sectors. Their role is bring together representatives from across their communities to form Collaborative Community Groups (CCG), to discuss a range of issues relating to the reform of qualifications and assessments. The IRG and CCGs will meet regularly throughout the duration of the Review.
- 4.2. In addition to the IRG and the CCG's there will be wider engagement later in the year including a public consultation. Finally, there will also be opportunities for schools and colleges to feed into the review.

### **Engagement with secondary schools**

- 4.3. The IRG are currently preparing materials which aim to support schools to facilitate a number of short, small group discussions with pupils, teachers and parents on the following three topics:
- ◆ the vision and principles that should underpin a new approach to assessments and qualifications;
  - ◆ options for change; and
  - ◆ views on a proposed direction of travel set out in a draft final report.
- 4.4. Input from school communities is recognised as vitally important to the Review, and the IRG has asked local authorities to share information about this planned engagement with head teachers, and support schools to create a space for these discussions. Schools will be invited to consider programmes for in-service days and other communication channels which will enable staff to contribute to the discussions on the vision and principles associated with a new approach to assessments and qualifications and the options for change.

## **5. Timeline**

- 5.1. Materials for schools and colleges in respect of Vision and Principles were produced at the end of July 2022 in advance of the start of the new school term in August.
- 5.2. The IRG will seek returns from schools on the Vision and Principles by mid-September. The rationale for separating these tasks is to ensure that there is a discussion and consideration of the purposes and principles of assessment, before any options are presented.
- 5.3. This is also consistent with the approach that is being taken in engagement with other stakeholder groups.
- 5.4. Professor Hayward is due to provide a final report to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills by the end of March 2023.

## **6. Employee Implications**

- 6.1. None

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1. None

## **8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

8.1. There are no significant implications for climate change, sustainability and the environment arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **9. Other Implications**

9.1. There are no implications for risk in terms of the information contained in this report.

## **10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

10.2 The planned timetable for the IRG to engage and consult with schools and other stakeholders prior to the end of March 2023 is noted.

**Tony McDaid**

**Executive Director (Education Resources)**

29 June 2022

## **Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes**

- ◆ Education and learning: Inspiring learners, transforming learners and strengthening partnerships

## **Previous References**

- ◆ None

## **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ [Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
- ◆ OECD Report – review of the curriculum

## **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact: - Stewart Nicolson, Head of Education

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