

Ofqual Board

Paper 95/16

Date:

22 March 2017

Title:

Review of Board Committees

Report by:

Vickie Bentley, Interim Board Secretary

Responsible Director:

Sally Collier, Chief Regulator

Paper for decision**open paper****Issue**

1. To consider the outcome of a review of the membership of Board Committees.

Recommendation

2. The Board is recommended to:-
 - (i) reappoint Neil Watts to the Finance Committee until his new term of appointment to the Board ends in December 2017;
 - (ii) agree the proposed changes to the Vocational and Technical Group
 - (iii) reappoint the independent members of the Standards Advisory Group at Annex B for a twelve month period to 31 March 2018;

Background

3. The Standards Advisory and Vocational Advisory Groups are made up of both Board members and independent members with relevant expertise. The appointment of independent members to the groups is routinely made for a twelve-month period after which the operation and membership of the groups is reviewed.

4. The membership of the Finance and Audit & Risk Assurance Committees is also routinely reviewed.

Board Membership

5. The terms of office of three Board members, Maggie Galliers, Neil Watts and Tim Balcon, will come to an end on 31 March 2017. Tim Balcon and Maggie Galliers will leave the Board and we are awaiting the final approval of the Secretary of State to reappoint Neil Watts until December 2017. The Board is asked to reappoint Neil Watts to the Finance Committee. The current Board Committee membership is attached at annex A

Vocational Advisory Group

6. The role of the Vocational Advisory Group has also been reviewed and it is recommended that the Group should be disbanded in its current form in favour of a more flexible approach to sourcing external vocational expertise. The reason for this recommendation is that there have been changes in the Vocational and Technical Qualifications sector as well as an increased need for wider stakeholder engagement to inform our work. The Group as currently structured no longer fully meets our needs.
7. The Vocational Advisory Group has been in place since March 2014. It has met twice a year, and is charged with providing advice to Ofqual on qualification and assessment standards issues in relation to vocational qualifications. The Group has provided input to broad areas such as our overall approach to regulating vocational qualifications and public confidence in them. It contains a wide range of members, including academic researchers on vocational education, representatives from employer/sector groups and consultants/researchers with expertise in vocational assessment. When it was first launched, the Group provided a helpful boost to our awareness and understanding of issues in the vocational sector. Three years on, our need for input on those high level issues has diminished, whilst at the same time, we need to deepen our stakeholder engagement as we enter a period of intensive change to vocational and technical qualifications – not least functional skills reform, apprenticeship reforms and changes to qualifications in technical education.
8. To that end, we are establishing a new Vocational and Technical Qualifications Stakeholder Group. This will provide a broader range of advice and feedback to Ofqual, both on current vocational and technical qualifications and upcoming reforms. We want to benefit from front-line experience and insights into the skills and education system, including from those who deliver and rely on qualifications and assessments. We are inviting a wide range of stakeholders, including representative groups of training providers, employer

bodies, teaching associations, vocational interest groups. We are also inviting academics and researchers in the vocational sphere, including Vocational Advisory Group members.

9. At the same time our need for more detailed technical input on vocational assessment issues has also increased as we consider, for example, the detailed new Conditions required for Functional Skills qualifications. We would like to source this from our existing Standards Advisory Group (SAG) and bolster SAG's vocational assessment expertise, by inviting onto SAG a small number of appropriately skilled members of the current Vocational Advisory Group.
10. In addition to this, we envisage that we may need a more flexible and fast-paced source of external advice than two to three meetings per year can provide. We therefore intend to invite Group members to apply to join our pool of experts, so that we can call on individuals with specific expertise for advice as needed. We also intend to draw on them in our learning and development programme, thus bringing them in contact with a much broader range of Ofqual staff on areas of research expertise
11. The current members of the Vocational Advisory Group have been contacted to advise of the changing context and advice Ofqual will now require and the independent members are keen to remain engaged with Ofqual.

Standards Advisory Group

12. The Chair recently reviewed the membership of the Standards Advisory Group and no changes have been made. The Board is asked to reappoint the independent members of the Standards Advisory Group at Annex B for a further year to 31 March 2018.

Finance and Resource

13. Costs for meetings of Board committees including any attendance allowances payable to independent members of the Standards Advisory Group is included in the appropriate budgets.

Impact Assessments

Equality Analysis

14. Not applicable.

Risk Assessment

15. This section has been redacted, as its publication would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs.

Regulatory Impact Assessment

16. Not applicable.

Timescale

17. Reappointments will take effect from 1 April 2017.

Communications

18. Decisions taken by the Board on this matter will be communicated appropriately to those involved with the committees. Details of the membership of both groups is published on Ofqual's website.

Paper to be published	YES
Publication date (if relevant)	After meeting

ANNEXES LIST:-

ANNEX A Schedule of current Board Member Committee appointments (reappointed member highlighted)

ANNEX B Standards Advisory Group Independent Membership

Schedule of Board Member Committee appointments 2016/17 ANNEX A

	Standards Advisory Group	Finance Committee	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Number of board places	2 to 5	2 to 4	2 to 4
Mike Cresswell	X		
Anne Heal			C
Barnaby Lenon	X		X
Terri Scott			
Roger Taylor			
Tom Taylor		C	
Neil Watts		X	
Julius Weinberg	C		
Places appointed to	3	2	2

C Chair X Member

ANNEX B

Standards Advisory Group – Independent Membership

Professor Jo-Anne Baird, Pearson Professor and Director of the Oxford Centre for Educational Assessment

Professor Robert Coe, School of Education, Durham University

Dr Tina Isaacs, Programme Leader, MA in Educational Assessment, Institute of Education

Dr Alastair Pollitt, Cambridge Exam Research

Professor Gordon Stobart, Institute of Education, University of London

Professor Caroline Gipps, former Vice Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton

Dr Grace Grima, Director of Research, Pearson UK.

Alex Scharaschkin, Director of Research, AQA

Dr Rebecca Allen, Director, Education Datalab

Ian Bauckham, Executive Headteacher, Bennett Memorial Diocesan School

Tom Bramley, Deputy Director, Research Division, OCR