



Minutes

Emergency Board Meeting

Time and venue

08.30am by Microsoft Teams

Date

Thursday, 23 July 2020

Attendees

Board

Susan Barratt
Ian Bauckham
Delroy Beverley
Sally Collier Chief Regulator
Mike Cresswell
Hywel Jones
Catherine McClellan
Dame Christine Ryan
Roger Taylor Chair
Matt Tee
Mike Thompson
Frances Wadsworth

Ofqual

Phil Beach Executive Director, Vocational and Technical Qualifications
Beth Black Director for Research and Analysis (item 70/20)
Niamh Field Board Secretary
Daniel Gutteridge Director of Legal
Janet Holloway Associate Director Standards for Design, Development and
Evaluation of General Qualifications (item 71/20 – 72/20)
Matthew Humphrey Director of Legal Moderation and Enforcement
Kate Keating Director of Communications
Emma Leary Associate Director VTQ Policy (item 70/20)
Michelle Meadows Executive Director, Strategy, Risk and Research
Sean Pearce Chief Operating Officer
Natalie Prosser Director of Operations, VTQ (item 70/20)
Julie Swan Executive Director for General Qualifications
Lucy Sydney Director of Strategic Relationships (item 70/20)
Lydia Waine Associate Director Legal Establishment
Anona White Private Secretary to the Chief Regulator

68/20 Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Lesley Davies.

69/20 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

The Board congratulated Dame Christine Ryan on her appointment as Chair of Ofsted which she would commence on 01 August 2020.

73/20 Legal Update

The Chief Regulator reported that the first part of the communications strategy had been rolled out. The Summer Symposium, which took place on 21 July 2020, had been well received. A series of products had been developed for schools to assist learners to understand their options around their results. The Minister of State for Schools and Standards (the Minister) had sent a letter to the Chief Regulator on 22 July 2020 which thanked Ofqual for their work in response to COVID-19.

This section has been redacted on the basis it contains legally privileged information.

The Executive Director for Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs) provided an update to the Board on recent media interest in the International Baccalaureate (IB), which fell under the VTQ Extraordinary Regulatory Framework this summer.

70/20 VTQ Approach to 2020/21

It was anticipated that there would be continued disruption to teaching in the next academic year as a result of COVID-19. At the Emergency Board Meeting on 24 June 2020, the Board considered the proposed VTQ strategy for assessments and qualifications which learners were due to take in the 2020/21 academic year. A range of measures had been identified to explore with Awarding Organisations (AOs) to mitigate the impact of lost teaching and learning. At that meeting, the Board had requested further information on whether there could be a single approach that could be applied across all qualifications that Ofqual regulated and whether it would be possible to take steps to secure similar outcomes compared with previous years such that learners taking qualifications next year were not disadvantaged.

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

The Board noted in discussion that there was a clear need for a consistent approach to standards across all AOs to ensure that the skills acquired remained valuable for employers.

It was noted that there could be a requirement for additional resource in the future should Ofqual monitor oversight of all 2020/21 assessments.

RESOLVED:

The Board resolved to agree that Ofqual should:

- i. Proceed with an adaptations approach to mitigate the disadvantage faced by learners as a result of lost teaching and learning, and to minimise the impact of potential future disruption as a result of the ongoing crisis.
- ii. Through its adaptations approach, seek to secure consistency as far as possible across the VTQ landscape.
- iii. Develop additional guidance to support the AOs in delivering their 2020/21 approach, and that it should consult on this (to be signed off by the Chief Regulator in consultation with the Chair).
- iv. Consider further how it supports and oversees awarding organisations in delivering their adaptations approaches.
- v. Explore the possibility of working alongside other parties to reduce any remaining disadvantage to learners.

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

71/20 Proposed changes to GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2021

It was reported that c29,000 responses had been received in relation to the consultation on the changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2021. The Chief Regulator and Executive Team would present the findings and proposals to the Minister later that day and seek views on the subject content of the qualifications and the extent to which the Department for Education (DfE) would wish to implement changes that would remove aspects of the content or change the way which students engaged with the content.

The Board considered the initial recommendations for each subject at GCSE, AS and A level in 2021.

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

The Board would agree the 2021 arrangements at the Emergency Board Meeting on 29 July 2020.

72/20 Update on 2020 Appeals guidance

The Executive Director for GQs reported that consultation on guidance for appeal arrangements 2020 had closed and c130 responses had been received. The Board had delegated sign-off of the final statutory guidance to the Chief Regulator and a further update would be provided to the Board on 29 July 2020.

ACTION: JS

The guidance would focus on the use of wrong data or mistake in data provided. The final guidance would include examples of how a centre could make an evidence-based appeal such as evidence of improved performance over two years at A level only.

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

74/20 Any Other Business

The Executive Director for Strategy, Risk and Research would share data on the distribution of calculated grades and the impact on individual learners once it had been collated.

ACTION: MM

The meeting ended at 10.34am.