



Notes

Board Briefing

Time and venue

16.45pm by Microsoft Teams

Date

Wednesday, 12 August 2020

Attendees

Board

Susan Barratt

Ian Bauckham

Delroy Beverley

Sally Collier

Chief Regulator

Mike Cresswell

Lesley Davies

Hywel Jones

Catherine McClellan

Dame Christine Ryan

Roger Taylor

Chair

Mike Thompson

Matt Tee

Frances Wadsworth

Ofqual

Phil Beach

Executive Director, Vocational and Technical Qualifications

Niamh Field

Board Secretary

Richard Garrett

Director of Policy and Strategic Relationships General Qualifications

Daniel Gutteridge

Director of Legal

Michael Hanton

Director of Strategy and Markets

Matthew Humphrey

Director of Legal Moderation and Enforcement

Cath Jadhav

Director of Standards and Comparability

Kate Keating

Director of Communications

Michelle Meadows

Executive Director, Strategy, Risk and Research (part)

Sean Pearce

Chief Operating Officer

Julie Swan

Executive Director for General Qualifications

Anona White

Private Secretary to the Chief Regulator

1 Welcome and apologies for absence

There were no apologies.

2 Update on Summer awarding

An update was provided to the Board on stakeholder feedback following the Secretary of State for Education's (SoS) announcement of the triple lock proposal. Whilst most stakeholders had expressed concern about the timing, and clarity of announcements, and on the consistency of mock exam arrangements between schools, some had indicated it might be a route to allow appeal where standardisation produced changes in centre assessment grades (CAGs) which did not appear appropriate to the centre involved.

Stakeholders had raised concerns about clarity for students about to receive their results and those who might want to appeal to receive their mock grades.

The Board noted that appropriate safeguards would need to be put in place to ensure that students could not determine for themselves the results they wanted. There appeared to be a general assumption that a higher mock grade would be awarded even where this was higher than the CAG.

The Board was briefed on a session with the exam boards to consider how a valid mock exam could be defined. It was unknown if the DfE had undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment for the mock appeals announcement they had made. It was noted that this route of appeal may not be available to all private candidates.

The Board was informed that Ofqual had issued a statement in response to the DfE press release indicating it would issue guidance on this early next week. The Board was informed of the important next steps to do so, including outlining the standard of a valid mock exam, and the evidence needed to appeal. A draft Direction from the SoS setting out government's policy position had been received shortly prior to the meeting but there had been no opportunity to review in order to brief the Board on its content in this meeting.

The Board noted potential challenges with implementation of this appeal route, including the potential volume of appeals and this being unmanageable for exam boards. The Board was informed that Ofqual has no data on the proportion of CAGs which are lower than mock results on which to inform this risk. The Board noted that a mock result would have been considered by a centre in determining a CAG for a candidate, as this was a holistic judgement arrived at considering all the evidence available to it.

The Board acknowledged that there were significant challenges to public confidence in this year's results, particularly after the Scottish decision. It was anticipated that some stakeholder groups would call for CAGs to be issued on results day. The Board considered its response in these circumstances and whether Ofqual stay silent or publicly explain its view that CAGs would be detrimental.

An Emergency Board Meeting would be convened on 13 August 2020 to formally agree Ofqual's position on appeals for mocks. It was anticipated that the direction from the SoS would be finalised in that time.

The meeting ended at 17:55pm.