



Minutes

Emergency Board Meeting

Time and venue

17.30pm by Microsoft Teams

Date

Tuesday, 18 August 2020

Attendees

Board

Susan Barratt	
Ian Bauckham	
Delroy Beverley	
Sally Collier	Chief Regulator
Mike Cresswell	
Lesley Davies	
Hywel Jones	
Catherine McClellan	
Roger Taylor	Chair of the Board
Mike Thompson	
Frances Wadsworth	In the Chair

Ofqual

Phil Beach	Executive Director, Vocational and Technical Qualifications
Beth Black	Director for Research and Analysis
Niamh Field	Board Secretary
Cath Jadhav	Director of Standards and Comparability
Michael Hanton	Director of Strategy and Markets
Matthew Humphrey	Director of Legal Moderation and Enforcement
Kate Keating	Director of Communications
Emma Leary	Associate Director, VTQ Policy
Michelle Meadows	Executive Director, Strategy, Risk and Research
Sean Pearce	Chief Operating Officer
Natalie Prosser	Director of Operations for VTQs
Julie Swan	Executive Director for General Qualifications
Lucy Sydney	Director of Strategic Relationships for VTQ
Anona White	Private Secretary to the Chief Regulator

109/20 Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Christine Ryan and Matt Tee.

The Chair and Chief Regulator were delayed in a meeting with the Secretary of State for Education so Frances Wadsworth took the Chair until the Chair of the Board joined the meeting at 18.04pm.

110/20 Declarations of interest

Ian Bauckham and Hywel Jones declared that some of the academies within their Multi Academy Trust's used Cambridge Technicals and BTECs.

111/20 Vocational and Technical Qualifications Update

The meeting had been called to provide board members with an update on the implications for Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs) of a reversion to Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) for A Levels and GCSEs, delivery issues, and communications challenges.

The Board was reminded that Ofqual established an Extraordinary Regulatory Framework (ERF) with a hierarchy of principles that gave Awarding Organisations (AOs) the option to design an approach to awarding qualifications that reflected a range of assessment approaches. The VTQ ERF worked differently to the General Qualification (GQ) model in that results were based on sufficient evidence to remain valid and reliable, but the ERF gave AOs discretion in their approach and flexibility as to how they delivered those results. Overall, the VTQ ERF had performed well.

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

The Board noted the issues, and the importance of strong and public communications that issues with the use of algorithms should be investigated by awarding organisations, in the interest of public confidence.

The Board considered it appropriate for Ofqual to advise AOs to consider and prioritise the principle of the ERF to avoid delays where possible. The Board was advised that Ofqual had done so.

The Board noted the report provided and were informed that AOs had been working consistently and through the weekend to ensure grades were reissued on time for results day. AOs were now working hard to change and recalculate results to issue the higher of the CAG or the calculated grade, where appropriate, in light of the changed policy position for general qualifications. All AOs would be publishing guidance on this.

The Board was informed of specific issues related to delayed or potentially delayed awards from some AOs.

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

The Board was informed of Ofqual's understanding of the current expected timescales for resolution in each circumstance, and Ofqual's active monitoring of progress.

Ofqual was working with the AOs such that as many certificates as possible could be issued on time. Delays to Level 3 certificates would require careful management to ensure learners could move onto their future destinations.

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

Consideration was given to the media attention around GCSE results and VTQ results.

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

Some Board members asked for a table to be provided daily outlining which Level 3 certificates had and had not been issued for each AO, in line with available management information. **ACTION: PB**

The Board considered it important for very clear communications to clarify the position, and AOs ability to amend their approach, where they considered it justified. The Board Communications Working Group would consider.

ACTION: PB

112/20 Any Other Business

The Chief Regulator informed the Board that she and the Chair had been called to a hearing of the Education Select Committee on 2 September 2020.

The Chair reminded Board members to not make any comments to press or media requests.

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 18.47pm.