

Information pack for appointment to the Board of Quality Meat Scotland 2025



The Minister for Agriculture and Connectivity is seeking to appoint 3 x Members to the Board of Quality Meat Scotland. The Minister, values highly the benefits of having different points of view on the board and welcomes applications from people from all walks of life.

The appointments process for this board follows the [Code of Practice for Public Appointments](#) and is regulated by the [Ethical Standards Commissioner](#).

Key dates for this appointment round

Closing date	18 August
Sift of applications	27 August
When applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	End of August / early September
Interviews	<p>In person interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11 & 12 September - Edinburgh St. Andrews House, 2 Regent Road, City Of Edinburgh EH1 3DG• 15 September – Glasgow Scottish Government Building tbc <p>It is unlikely that we will be able to offer an alternative interview date.</p>
Ministerial decision	October
Start date	November



July 2025

Dear applicant,

Appointment of Members of the Board of Quality Meat Scotland

Many thanks for your interest in the Board member positions which have become available at Quality Meat Scotland (QMS).

We require three new Board members who possess a wide range of skills, with appointments commencing in November 2025.

QMS is a Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB). This status allows us to collect a statutory levy on every bovine, ovine and porcine animal slaughtered in Scotland – which is our key funding source. QMS has a Board of 12, all of whom are non-executives. Our Chief Executive, Sarah Miller attends all of the Board meetings, along with members of the senior management team as and when required.

QMS plays a crucial role within the Scottish red meat sector, from “on farm” and “in abattoir” Industry Development work, including the hugely successful Monitor Farm programme, to the provision of vital industry information and statistics upon which businesses rely when making day to day and longer-term strategic decisions. We carry out vital health and education work in schools across Scotland, working closely with The Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET), and other key organisations and we are a longstanding and trusted source of industry information such as market reports and research.

Perhaps we are best known for the ownership and promotion of our three coveted brands; Scotch Beef and Scotch Lamb, both of which carry Protected Geographic Indication Status (PGI's) and Specially Selected Pork. These iconic Brands are underpinned by our world leading and unique Whole of Life and Whole of Chain Quality Assurance Schemes, covering Cattle and Sheep production, Pig production, Feed Companies, Livestock Haulage, Livestock Auction Marts and Red Meat Processors.

For all the great work QMS does, it is a relatively small organisation with a staff of only 31 FTE. These individuals possess specialist knowledge and skills in their chosen disciplines, and together are the backbone of the organisation.

You might think you have insufficient experience of senior management or service on other boards to be appointed to the Quality Meat Scotland Board, but that is not necessarily the case. We need applications from the widest possible range of people so that collectively, the Board will have the breadth and depth of skills and experience it requires.

We particularly welcome applications from women, disabled people, LGBTI ethnic minority communities and people in any age bracket that are involved in the sector, or indeed have a good knowledge of the industry, as well as those from islands. We are an inclusive organisation and welcome diversity.

I have had the privilege and pleasure of serving as Chair of the QMS Board since October 2018, working with many fantastic Board Members whose contributions have been hugely valuable. If you are interested and think you can help us meet our strategic aims, I sincerely hope that you will apply and I look forward to meeting with you.

If you would like further information about QMS, please visit www.qmscotland.co.uk/ and www.scotchkitchen.com/.

If you would like to have a private discussion about anything relating to the appointments process, please contact Sarah Millar smillar@qmscotland.co.uk CEO

Yours sincerely

Kate Rowell
Chair of the QMS Board

Information about the role

Remuneration	<p>Members of the Board receive £198.36 per day, as at 1 July 2025. Expenses incurred as a result of carrying out the duties of the appointment, including reasonable travel and subsistence costs and dependant carer and childcare expenses, will be reimbursed.</p> <p>The appointment is non-pensionable.</p>
Time commitment	<p>The Board meets six to eight times each year with Members of the Board committed to a maximum of 20 days per year. By the nature of a non-executive member role, the time commitment will vary from week to week. It involves a mix of activities including preparing for and attending Board meetings and undertaking other duties and responsibilities such as engaging with stakeholders and occasionally attending events.</p>
Length of appointment term	<p>The term of appointments will be for four years. Three new Members will be appointed from November 2025.</p> <p>There is the possibility of reappointment subject to evidence of effective performance and having regard to the skills, knowledge, understanding and experience required by the Board at the time. Any appointments and subsequent reappointments will not extend beyond a maximum of eight years.</p>
Location of meetings	<p>Meetings may be held in different places at different times of the year, it is likely that some meetings will be held in the QMS building at 4 Redheughs Rigg, West point South Gyle, Edinburgh.</p> <p>There will be an occasional need for the Chair and Members to attend industry meetings and events elsewhere including the Royal Highland Show in June each year.</p> <p>Meetings in 2026 will provisionally fall on the following dates:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 29 January - Planning Day • Thursday 19 February - Board meeting • Thursday 23 April - Board meeting • Wednesday 24 June – Evening meeting with stakeholders • Thursday 25 June - Board meeting • Wednesday 23 September – Full Away day • Thursday 24 September - Board Meeting • Wednesday 4 November – Board Planning meeting and Evening meeting with stakeholders • Thursday 5 November – Board meeting
Disqualifications	<p>There is no bar on non-British nationals applying for and being appointed to the board of Non-Departmental Public Bodies. However, you must be legally entitled to work in the UK.</p> <p>Applicants will be ineligible to apply for this appointment if they have already served a total of eight years as a Member of the QMS Board.</p> <p>A member of the Scottish Parliament cannot also hold a public appointment for public bodies listed in the schedule of the Scottish Parliament (Disqualification) Order 2020.</p> <p>Former ministers and senior crown servants (director general level and above) should seek advice from the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (ACOBA) before applying for this role.</p>

The Board of Quality Meat Scotland

Quality Meat Scotland is the public body responsible for helping the Scottish red meat sector improve its efficiency, sustainability, integrity and profitability and maximise its contribution to Scotland's economy.

Our internationally recognised and approved assurance schemes cover over 90% of livestock farmed for red meat in Scotland. With centuries of tradition behind them, Scottish red meat farmers pride themselves on meeting the very highest standards demanded by modern consumers.

QMS will promote and protect the Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb and Specifically Selected pork brands through clear, effective communication to ensure consumers fully understand what sets our brands apart – the Scotch Difference.

QMS also provide quality assurance initiatives to build the brand of Scotch Beef, Scotch Lamb, and Specially Selected Pork, and are dedicated to delivering professional services that help protect the Scottish meat industry and enable growth in domestic and international markets.

Strategic Aims

QMS has a number of strategic pillars :

- **Provenance**
To deliver and promote authentic, trusted brands, underpinned by quality assurance, which give Scottish red meat a competitive advantage.
- **Productivity & Profitability**
Drive the development of key markets and foster a culture of innovation which provides practical tools and insight to drive profitability across the supply chain.
- **Planet & Place**
To build Scotland a global reputation for sustainable red meat production, which enhances the environment and place from which it comes.
- **People:**
A QMS that is people-driven, supporting all those working across the red meat supply chain and building talent within the organisation to be ambitious and creative.

[See the QMS 5 year strategy 2024-2028 here](#)

The Role of the Board

The Board of QMS consists of 12 Members, including the Chair, and is supported by the Chief Executive. QMS has the following committees – Remuneration (Remco),

Brands Integrity, Audit and Risk, and the following groups – Assurance Scheme Standards Setting Bodies, Industry Leadership Groups for Beef, Sheep, Pigs and Climate & Nature, Butcher's groups and the Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group.

. Board members contribute to fulfilling the board's role which is to:

- establish the overall strategic direction of QMS within the needs of the industry and the policy, planning and resources framework determined by Scottish Ministers;
- ensure that Scottish Ministers are informed of any changes including financial impacting on the strategic direction, or attainability of QMS's targets and determine the steps needed to deal with such changes;
- ensure that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds (i.e. all funds falling within the stewardship of QMS) are complied with and to ensure the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the Scottish Government;
- ensure that the Board receives and reviews regular financial information concerning the management of QMS; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of QMS;
- demonstrate high standards of corporate governance at all times, including by setting up and using an independent audit committee to help the Board to address the key financial and other risks facing QMS. The Board is expected to assure itself on the effectiveness of internal control and risk management systems;
- provide commitment and leadership in the development and promotion of Best Value principles throughout the organisation; and
- appoint a Chief Executive to QMS with responsibility for planning, performance management and monitoring; advising the Board; managing risk and resources and accounting for QMS' activities.

Board Member Role

Board members of QMS are appointed entirely on merit, to maintain the mix of skills, knowledge and experience required to allow the Board to successfully fulfil its duties as a Public Body. A board member's responsibilities include:

- setting the strategic and cultural direction of the organisation;
- providing oversight on issues of strategy, performance and resources;
- monitoring the reporting of performance and holding management to account through purposeful and constructive challenge and scrutiny;
- contributing to decision-making and to the work of board committees and advisory groups;
- acting as “ambassadors” for QMS by communicating clearly and effectively and establishing and promoting the work of QMS in the industry and community.

The Person Specification sets out the skills, knowledge and experience required across the three new board members.

The operational work of the organisation is delivered by around 31 QMS staff led by the Chief Executive, Sarah Miller.

Levy Payers

It is written in legislation that at least 50% of Board Members must be levy payers. At this time there are 50% of levy payers on the board and as such from the three appointments being made in this round, it is not an essential requirement to appoint levy payers, however that would not deter from us appointing levy payers* to ensure the 50% level is maintained ‘Levy Payers’ means a producer, slaughter or exporter of cattle, sheep or pigs, or the owner of any of these animals at the time of slaughter (this includes employees of those businesses and/or family members who are involved in such activities).

Further information

For further information about Quality Meat Scotland and the roles, please contact the QMS Chief Executive, Sarah Miller at smiller@qmscotland.co.uk. You can also find out more about QMS at www.qmscotland.co.uk/.

The selection panel

Chair	Ashley Cooke – Deputy Director of Food & Drink, Scottish Government
Independent panel member	Ian McWatt - Deputy CEO & Director of Policy, Science and Operations, Food Standards Scotland
Panel member	Kate Rowell – Chair of Quality Meat Scotland

Please note that applicants will be asked to declare if they know any members of the selection panel. The panel will also declare if they know any applicants. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be managed in line with the [Ethical Standards Commissioners Code of Practice for Public Appointments](#). If you are unsure whether you have a conflict of interest and would like to discuss this, please contact the QMS Chief Executive, Sarah Millar at smillar@qmscotland.co.uk.

Person Specification

The person specification sets out the skills, knowledge and understanding and experience we are seeking for these positions and indicates how and at which stage in the process each of the criteria will be tested. None of these requirements sought need to have been gained by working in a management post or at a senior level. You may have a natural aptitude in these areas, or you may have gained them by being active in your community, in a voluntary capacity or through your personal experience. As it is important that there is the right balance of experience, knowledge and expertise on the Board, Ministers will take into account the requirements outlined and make appointments based on the three priority criteria in order to ensure that there is a balance of skills, knowledge and expertise on the Board.

In recognition of the importance of appropriate industry representation on the Board, at least 50% of Board Members must be levy payers. From the three appointments being made in this round, it is not essential to appoint levy payers, however that would not deter from us appointing levy payers* to ensure the 50% level is continued going forward. You will be asked to confirm in the application form if you are a levy payer please note, if you are not a levy payer, this does not exclude you from applying.

In respect of these posts, both the priority and essential criteria are a mandatory requirement. The priority criterion will be tested at both application and at interview stage. The essential criterion will only be tested at interview stage.

Priority criteria

We are looking for new members who can put their experience to good use on the board. The table below sets out the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes that we are seeking and explains how the criteria will be tested. You may have gained your experience through work, by being active in your community, in a voluntary capacity or through your own lived experience.

The priority criterion is weighted over the essential criteria, and the candidates who provide the strongest evidence against the priority criterion will be considered most

able to fulfil the role. In the event that candidates provide evidence of equal merit against the priority criterion, the panel will then take into account the strength of the evidence presented against the essential criteria in determining the candidate(s) most able to fulfil the role.

In your application, you need to demonstrate evidence of at least one of the priority criteria and should consider where they have strengths - applicants can if they chose, demonstrate evidence of more than one of the priority criteria, but this is not mandatory.

Priority Criteria	What are we looking for?	How this will be assessed?
1. Knowledge and experience of animal production (specifically pig or sheep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence of innovation, performance improvement, and/or engagement with the industry. current understanding of opportunities and challenges in the animal production sector. 	<p>You will be asked to set out evidence in your written application – max 500 words.</p> <p>The evidence will be tested further at interview if you are shortlisted.</p>
2. Knowledge and experience of financial and risk management with particular reference to audit processes and internal control of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> experience and understanding of audit processes and risk management; an understanding of good governance processes 	<p>You will be asked to set out evidence in your written application – max 500 words.</p> <p>The evidence will be tested further at interview if you are shortlisted.</p>
3. Knowledge and experience of red meat processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence of innovation, performance improvement, and/or engagement with the industry. appreciation of good practice in the industry 	<p>You will be asked to set out evidence in your written application – max 500 words.</p> <p>The evidence will be tested further at interview if you are shortlisted.</p>

Essential Criteria

Applicants need to evidence all three elements of the essential criteria at interview:

Essential Criterion	What are we looking for?	How will this be assessed?
1. Ability to challenge constructively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> able to challenge the views of others in a constructive way; able to demonstrate where challenging 	Your evidence will be tested at

and contribute to high quality decision making and priority setting within a Board or team environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> decisions has led to a positive change; able to demonstrate where in-depth understanding of issues has led to the high-level questioning of proposals; able to hold management to account for decisions made. 	interview if you are shortlisted.
2. Ability to communicate clearly and effectively to a range of stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> being focused, succinct and confident when communicating and expressing views and opinions; able to represent and promote an organisation to a wide range of stakeholders, e.g. politicians, the media – act as an ambassador; able to influence senior level colleagues and stakeholders and able to promote and get buy-in of the objectives/benefits to a wide range of stakeholders. 	Your evidence will be tested at interview if you are shortlisted.
3. Ability to contribute effectively to strategic planning and risk management processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> able to contribute to the successful development of a strategy or business plan; able to identify priorities, challenges and risks within different timeframes and evaluate their impact from a strategic perspective; able to contribute to the improvement of the performance of an organisation or a business; demonstrate a clear informed picture of the long term aim of an organisation when considering issues - see whole picture. 	Your evidence will be tested at interview if you are shortlisted.

How to apply online

Find the role you wish to apply for on this [website](#), open the advert, click 'apply now' and follow the instructions.

1. Complete the personal information and conflict of interest questions.
2. Respond to the application against the priority criteria being assessed **noting the word limit** in the application pack.

3. PLEASE NOTE you do not have the option to edit your application once you click 'submit'. You must have all your information and attachments to hand before submitting your application.

We strongly recommend that you draft your answers in a word document and check that you are happy with them before copying and pasting your answers in the relevant sections of the online application.

Please note that you will not be able to update your answers or supporting documents once the online application is submitted. Late applications will not be accepted by the selection panel.

If you use assistive technology, please contact the Public Appointments Team for an accessible application form by email at public.appointments@gov.scot

The assessment process

The assessment process will happen as follows:

1. The selection panel will assess all applications against the criteria for appointment (see the person specification). Those who demonstrate evidence that most closely meet the criteria tested at this stage will be shortlisted for interview.
2. Interviews will be in person in a Scottish Government building.
3. The selection panel will interview candidates, the questions they ask will relate directly to the criteria for appointment. The selection panel will also ask

questions relevant to the fit and proper person test (see lower down on this page) which will include questions about the [Principles of Public Life](#).

4. Those invited for interview, will also be asked to undertake an additional task. Full details on the final stage of assessment, will be provided to those candidates who are invited.
5. The selection panel will review the evidence provided and agree on which candidates have most closely met the criteria for selection and should be recommended to the appointing Minister.
6. The appointing Minister will make a decision on who to appoint based on evidence from the selection panel. The appointing Minister may request to meet with candidates before making a final decision.
7. Appointees will be asked to complete pre-appointment checks which will include a Disclosure Check (there is no charge for this). An appointment is conditional on satisfactory completion of these.

Guaranteed interviews

This appointment round will provide guaranteed interviews for disabled people who meet the criteria for the role being tested at the application stage. The selection panel will not know which applicants have requested a guaranteed interview until the shortlisting is complete.

Fit and proper person checks

In the context of public appointments, a fit and proper person is someone who is suitable because they meet the requirements of the role, and their past or present activities and behaviour means they are suitable. Tests are built into different stages of the appointment process to ensure that:

- Conduct to date has been compatible with the public appointment
- Membership is not barred by the body's constitution e.g., criminal record or bankruptcy (see disqualifications)
- There are no unmanageable conflicts of interest
- Political activity is declared
- There is agreement to abide by the [Principles of Public life in Scotland](#)
- There is confirmation that the time commitment required for the role can be met.

Social media checks for candidates invited to interview

The selection panel may consider publicly available information about candidates which is posted by candidates on social media. Any findings that the selection panel agree are pertinent to the role or that may call into question suitability for the appointment, credibility of the appointments process or the public body will be discussed with candidates at interview. Consideration of any issues will take place openly and transparently to establish the facts. Candidates will be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns. This information will be handled in line with the Privacy Notice for public appointments.

Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018

Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 Scottish Government recognises the implications of the Supreme Court judgement dated 16 April 2025 for public appointments subject to the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. The Supreme Court ruled that a person with a full gender recognition certificate (GRC) which recognises their gender as female, is not a “woman” for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and consequently the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. Revised statutory guidance on the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 has been prepared and published. The updated guidance will apply to this appointment process once available. The Scottish Government is committed to dignity, fairness and respect for all and actively invites applications from all.

Common questions and answers

Who can I contact to speak about this role?	QMS Chief Executive, Sarah Millar at smillar@qmscotland.co.uk .
Who can I speak to about a disability related reasonable adjustment?	Please contact the Public Appointments Team Email: public.appointments@gov.scot Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via contactSCOTLAND-BSL
I am having a problem with the application process who can I speak with?	Please contact the Public Appointments Team (see contact details above).
Do you have any advice for candidates attending interviews?	Yes. More information is provided here: Introduction - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
I can't attend the interview in person, can I attend remotely?	Possibly. You can request to attend the interview using MS teams. Please contact the Public Appointments Team (see contact details above).
Will you reimburse expenses for attending an interview?	Yes. You can claim reasonable expenses, further information will be provided with the invitation to interview.
What does 'appointed on merit' mean?	Appointed on merit means that the people who are appointed most closely meet the criteria that is sought for the board vacancy at a point in time. People are assessed on the evidence that they present in the appointments process and the findings of the fit and proper person test.

What role does the Ethical Standards Commissioner (ESC) have in the appointments process?	The ESC regulate and monitor the public appointments process . The Commissioner plays a role in ensuring appointments are made on merit and use fair methods. More information about the Commissioner's role is provided here: Public appointments Information leaflet Ethical Standards Commissioner
Can I apply if I am not a British citizen?	Yes. You can apply for and be appointed to the Boards of Public Bodies if you are not a British citizen however you must be legally entitled to work in the UK.
Would remuneration for a public appointment impact on my benefits?	Possibly. Taking up a remunerated public appointment may affect benefits payments. This will depend on individual circumstances and you should seek advice from your benefits provider. More information is provided here: Public appointments and welfare benefits: information - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Do the selection panel see information from the diversity monitoring form?	No. Diversity monitoring information provided by applicants is not shared with the selection panel. If applicants opt for a guaranteed interview this information will be shared with the selection panel. Information about a reasonable adjustment may be shared with the selection panel to ensure that requirements are met (e.g. if a BSL interpreter is required).
Do I need to provide an email address and contact details at application stage?	In order to meet the requirements of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) the Scottish Government must be able to verify the credentials of applicants for public appointments should they be recommended for appointment. To ensure that this is possible all applicants must provide an address and contact details at application stage. If applicants do not provide this information their application will be rejected.
How will my personal information be handled?	All personal information will be handled with great care and in line with UK GDPR and data protection requirements. Further information can be found in the Privacy Notice .

Can I get feedback on my application or interview?	Yes. Feedback is available on request.
Is any training provided if I am offered and take up an appointment?	Yes. Each board has their own induction process and training offer. New appointees are also invited to attend an induction day hosted by the Scottish Government.
Can I apply for a Chair role on a board if I have already been a member of that board?	Yes. Board members can serve a maximum of 8 years on one board in one role. The board Chair is considered a different role and so current and previous members can apply.
Is it possible to hold more than one public appointment?	Yes. It is possible to have more than one public appointment. You should check that you can make the time commitment for an additional appointment and that there are no unmanageable conflicts of interest.
Are public appointments announced?	Yes. Every appointment is announced here: Public appointments: news releases - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) The board may also announce new appointments on their own website and social media platforms. Information published will include a biography and details of any political activity within the last 5 years.
What standards are expected of board members?	The conduct expected of board members of Scottish public boards is set out here: Members of devolved public bodies: model code of conduct - December 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) (this includes the Principles of Public Life)
How can I complain about the public appointments process?	Further information about the complaints process for public appointments can be found here: How to apply - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) Anyone concerned about public appointments can raise a complaint and have it independently investigated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner. Investigation process public appointments Ethical Standards Commissioner

For further information

Please contact the Public Appointments Team, Scottish Government

Email: public.appointments@gov.scot

Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#)

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