

Information pack for appointment to the board of Qualifications Scotland

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills is seeking to appoint **six new members** to the inaugural board of Qualifications Scotland (QS). The Cabinet Secretary seeks to appoint a diverse board, and particularly welcomes applications from those who bring a range of experiences and insight to the board.

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

Key dates for this appointment round

Closing date	12.00, Thursday 14 August 2025
Sift of applications	Tuesday 19 August 2025
Date applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	w/c 25 August 2025
Interviews	<p>Interviews will be held on Monday 20 October, Tuesday 21 October and Wednesday 22 October 2025.</p> <p>They will be in person at: SQA, Lowden Building, 24 Wester Shawfair, Dalkeith, Midlothian, EH22 1FD.</p> <p>Alternative interview arrangements may be made in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>It is unlikely that we will be able to offer an alternative interview date.</p>
Ministerial decision	By 31 October 2025
Start date	1 December 2025

Welcome

I'm deeply passionate about achieving the very best for everyone who studies and teaches our qualifications. In December 2025 the SQA will be replaced by Qualifications Scotland. The inaugural Board will play a crucial role in cultivating and creating an organisation built on strong, positive values, guiding this significant step towards a more responsive and accountable education system. I recognise the professionalism and excellence of our qualifications staff, and want our new Board to support them on this journey.

We are actively recruiting for six new Non-Executive Directors to join the Board of Qualifications Scotland. This is an exceptional opportunity to be at the forefront of shaping Scotland's future qualifications landscape in its brand new national qualifications body. We are looking for a diverse range of individuals to apply. Whether you have prior experience or looking to take on a Board role for the first time, we encourage your application. We are also keen to hear from people across the entire breadth of Scotland, from the Borders to the Shetland Isles, to ensure our Board reflects the nation it serves.

The Board will have collective responsibility for setting the strategic direction for Qualifications Scotland and ensuring that the new body is more responsive and accountable. We work with a wide range of stakeholders including learners, schools, local authorities, colleges, training providers, and businesses and it is essential that their experiences inform the work of the organisation.

Work on the establishment of Qualifications Scotland is well underway, and we are seeking enthusiastic, forward-thinking professionals eager to help shape the new organisation for future success. Our ability to achieve this is fundamentally dependent on how we work in partnership with policy makers, the education community, our trade unions, and our staff. We are absolutely committed to this collaborative approach.

If you believe you are a good fit for helping us progress and have any questions on the appointment, please contact the Public Appointments Team by emailing public.appointments@gov.scot or calling 0300 244 1898. You can also email me on shirley.rogers@sqa.org.uk to schedule a chat if you would find that helpful.

Thank you for your interest and good luck with your application.

Shirley Rogers

Chair

Information about the role

Remuneration	£238.18 per day to a maximum of £5,478.14 per year and reasonable expenses.
Time commitment	<p>Non-executive members of Qualifications Scotland will be expected to ordinarily devote up 23 days a year to their duties.</p> <p>Members will be expected to attend all Board meetings unless otherwise agreed with the chair. Qualifications Scotland will have a number of committees: Audit Committee, Accreditation Committee, Learner Interest Committee, Teacher and Practitioner Interest Committee, Qualifications Committee, People Committee, and the Strategic Advisory Council.</p> <p>Members will be required to attend meetings of Qualifications Scotland's committees as agreed with the chair.</p>
Length of appointment term	Up to four years
Location of meetings	Meetings are a mix of either online meetings via Microsoft Teams or in-person meetings. In person meetings will take place either at the Optima building in Glasgow and or at the Lowden building in Shawfair Park, Midlothian.
Disqualifications	Disqualifications are set out in Schedule 1, Part 2, S3(4) and (5) of the Education (Scotland) Bill as passed at stage 3 .

Qualifications Scotland

Following the conclusion of stage 3 of the Education (Scotland) Bill, and subject to Royal Assent, Qualifications Scotland will become Scotland's new national awarding and qualifications body, replacing the Scottish Qualifications Authority ("SQA") in December 2025.

The Bill and establishment of Qualifications Scotland are key milestones in the Scottish Government's Education Reform Programme which will deliver a system that improves outcomes for young people and those undertaking education and training at all ages. One which supports our teachers and practitioners as they continue to strive for excellence in teaching.

Central to the Bill are enhanced provisions that will support efforts to enable the Qualifications Scotland to build trust, restore confidence, and importantly to change ways of working, more readily drawing on the views of stakeholders and increasing the transparency of decision-making. It does so by establishing new governance arrangements which includes measures to ensure greater diversity and challenge on the board.

The board is required to include practising teachers from school and college settings, as well as individuals with knowledge of the interests of: those undertaking qualifications; staff; and, businesses. New learner and teacher charters, developed in partnership with users, will ensure greater transparency and accountability. New Statutory committees, namely the learner interest committee and teacher and practitioner interest committee, will ensure that the views of a wide range of pupils, teachers and other people directly influence the organisation's decision making.

Qualifications Scotland is expected to have two main functions:

1. The development and awarding of qualifications in Scotland
2. The accreditation of qualifications in Scotland and internationally

It will be an executive non-departmental public body which reports to Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Parliament. Its functions are set out in the [Education \(Scotland\) Bill](#)

The Board of Qualifications Scotland will consist of a minimum of 11 and maximum of 15 non-executives members appointed by Scottish Ministers in line with the [Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments in Scotland](#).

The role of the board member

The four main functions of the board of a public body are: to ensure that the body delivers its functions in accordance with ministers' policies and priorities; to provide strategic leadership; to ensure financial stewardship; and to hold the Chief Executive and senior management team to account.

Board members must adhere to collective corporate responsibility, confidentiality and the highest standards of conduct, acting in accordance with the [Key Principles of Public Life](#).

Members are responsible for identifying, and taking advice on, any conflicts of interest that may arise between the public body and their outside interests.

Individual board members should contribute fully to board deliberations and exercise a healthy challenge function.

The board will be responsible for shaping the strategic direction of Qualifications Scotland, including its Executive Management Team. It will also work towards the overall aim for Qualifications Scotland to be more responsive and accountable to the needs of its stakeholders, particularly learners and teachers. It will help to make sure that Qualifications Scotland's policies and services are aligned with ministers vision for reform to the qualifications, education and skills system.

Qualifications Scotland's Board members will prepare for, attend and positively contribute to meetings of Qualifications Scotland and associated committees. They will assist in the development, approval and monitoring of the new Learner and Teacher Charters, as well as the Corporate Plan and take forward their respective strategic aims and objectives.

Board members are responsible for monitoring Qualifications Scotland's finances in line with the [Scottish Public Finance Manual](#). With the approval of Scottish Ministers, they will appoint Qualifications Scotland's Chief Executive.

Guidance for how board members should discharge their duties will be provided in appointment letters and is available in [On Board – A Guide for Members of Statutory Boards](#).

Person specification

We are looking to recruit **6 members** to the inaugural board of Qualifications Scotland and have identified specific requirements based on the Education (Scotland) Bill as passed and the needs of the organisation.

There are **four priority criteria across the six posts. Three of the posts must be filled by an educational professional.** The priority criteria are listed in **Section A** below. You must demonstrate that you have the experience, knowledge and expertise against **ONE of these criteria.**

There are 5 essential criteria listed in **Section B** below. In your **written application form**, you are asked to demonstrate that you have the experience, knowledge and expertise against **three of the criteria:** 1. seeing the bigger picture; 4. constructive challenge; and 5. good governance. All the criteria will be discussed with you if you are shortlisted for interview.

The tables below set out what 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 their chosen 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.

All applicants must complete Sections A and B.

SECTION A: Priority criteria

Priority criterion 1 (3 posts)	Indicators	How this will be assessed
Education professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is a school or college teacher registered with the GTCS or equivalent• Is currently teaching in a school or college in Scotland• Has a teaching qualification	In your written application , please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in a max of 300 words .

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of delivering change and improvement in education 	If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview .
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OR

Priority criterion 2 (1 post)	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
Knowledge of the interests of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently taking an SQA qualification • Recently completed an SQA qualification. • Support and work closely with those taking an SQA qualification • Has an SQA qualification and training to become a teacher in a school or college in Scotland 	<p>In your written application, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in a max of 300 words.</p> <p>If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview.</p>

OR

Priority criterion 3 (1 post)	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
Skills and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of the qualifications required by large scale businesses • Experience of overseeing and/or delivering training for qualifications in the workplace (e.g. professional qualifications, apprenticeships etc) 	<p>In your written application, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in a max of 300 words.</p> <p>If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview.</p>

OR

Priority criterion 4 (1 post)	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
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Workplace and employee relations; change management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the issues that impact staff • Experience of employee/management relations in the workplace • Ability to use your knowledge and experience of staff interests to support change in the workplace 	<p>In your written application, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in a max of 300 words.</p> <p>If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview.</p>
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SECTION B – Essential criteria

Essential criterion	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
1. Seeing the bigger picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to look ahead and consider major issues within different timeframes • Able to be flexible should context and circumstances change • Has a clear, informed picture of the long-term aim of the organisation when considering issues • Sees beyond their own personal experience and gives consideration to other information and viewpoints • Looks ahead and considers different issues/topics within different timeframes • Identifies some relevant implications from what is being discussed, such as challenges and risks 	<p>In your written application, please demonstrate how you meet this criteria in a max of 300 words.</p> <p>If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview.</p>
2. Informed decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates sound, unbiased judgement • Able to balance a number of different considerations when making decisions 	<p>If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises when information is limited and where more information might be needed • Thinks through the implications of decisions before coming to a final position • Able to explain how conclusions have been reached 	
3. Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows respect and appreciation for the skills and experience of colleagues • Empathetic and able to listen to the experiences and perspectives of others • Seeks out opportunities to build constructive relationships • Supports colleagues whenever possible • Shares knowledge with colleagues 	If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview .
4. Constructive challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident in expressing views and opinions in a group setting • Able to help others to consider their own position in a non-confrontational way • Evidence of where challenge has changed the views of others and influenced decisions without causing rancour or resentment. 	<p>In your written application, please demonstrate how you meet this criteria in a max of 300 words.</p> <p>If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with you during the interview.</p>
5. Good Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the role and responsibilities of members of a Board • Is able to identify and manage potential conflicts of interests. 	<p>In your written application, please demonstrate how you meet this criteria in a max of 300 words.</p> <p>If you are shortlisted, we will discuss this with</p>

		you during the interview.
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How to apply online

Click the 'apply now' link at the top of the advert. As part of the online application process, you will need to complete the personal information section, and then fill out and attach as a PDF [this application form](#).

The application form provides space for the following:

1. Supporting statement

You have 300 words in your supporting statement for **each criterion you are addressing**. You should clearly indicate throughout your statement which of the criteria you are evidencing.

2. Tailored career life/history (to be uploaded as an attachment)

In addition to your supporting statement, you should also submit a **tailored life/career history**. This should be no more than 600 words, and tailored to the role and the criteria set out in the table above. This will be used by the panel in conjunction with the supporting statement to provide evidence against each of the criteria listed. CVs submitted will **not** be considered.

Please note that **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. Late applications, and those without a supporting statement and CV **cannot be considered by the 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 selection panel

Chair	Lisa Bird, Deputy Director of Education Reform, Scottish Government
Independent panel member	Mark Ratter, Director for Education, East Renfrewshire Council
Representative from the Ethical Standards Commissioner	Ali Jarvis, Public Appointments Advisor
Panel member	Shirley Rogers, Chair, Qualifications Scotland

Please note that applicants are asked to declare if they know any members of the selection panel who are named in this pack. 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](#).

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. The selection panel will interview candidates. The questions they ask will relate directly to the criteria for appointment. You will be asked to deliver a presentation at the interview. **Presentation slides or other visual aids should not be used.**
3. The selection panel will also ask questions relevant to the fit and proper person test (see below) which will include questions about the [Principles of Public Life](#).
4. 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.
5. The appointing minister will make a decision about whom to appoint based on evidence from the selection panel. The appointing minister may request to meet with candidates before making a final decision.
6. Appointees will be asked to complete pre-appointment checks which will include a Disclosure Check (there is no charge for this). 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

The 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. 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?	SQA / Qualifications Scotland contact: Shirley Rogers, at shirley.rogers@sqa.org.uk . You can also find out more about SQA at: http://sqa.org.uk . Scottish Government contact: Lisa Bird, at lisa.bird@gov.scot .
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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?	Yes. 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?	<p>Yes. Every appointment is announced here: Public appointments: news releases - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</p> <p>The board may also announce new appointments on their own website and social media platforms.</p> <p>Information published will include a biography and details of any political activity within the last 5 years.</p>
What standards are expected of board members?	<p>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)</p>
How can I complain about the public appointments process?	<p>Further information about the complaints process for public appointments can be found here: How to apply - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)</p> <p>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</p>

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](#)



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba