

Applicant Information Pack – Chair Appointment to the Board of Quality Meat Scotland



The Minister for Agriculture, Marine and the Islands is seeking to appoint a new Chair 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	Tuesday 11 August 2026
Sift of applications	Tuesday 1 September 2026
When applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	Monday 7 September 2026
Assessment and Interviews	<p>An online assessment will be held on Tuesday 22 September 2026</p> <p>Interviews will be in person at St Andrews House, Edinburgh on Tuesday 6 October 2026</p> <p>Please keep these dates available.</p> <p>It is unlikely that we will be able to offer an alternative interview date.</p>
Ministerial decision	W/C 2 November 2026
Estimated start date	1 March 2027 (shadowing from January 2027)



July 2026

Dear applicant,

Appointment of Chair to the Board of Quality Meat Scotland

Many thanks for your interest in the Chair role.

We are looking for a new Chair who possesses a range of skills and experience, to start their appointment on 1 March 2027. The successful candidate will be informed in late 2026 and will be expected to job shadow and progress with their induction in January and February of 2027. There will also be a round of Board Member recruitment running in autumn 2026 with new members potentially starting 1 April 2027.

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 Millar 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 (PGIs) and Prime Scottish 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 35 FTE. These individuals possess specialist knowledge and skills in their chosen disciplines, and together are the backbone of the organisation.

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 lead the Board in meeting the 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

<p>Remuneration</p>	<p>The Chair receives £379.32 per day. 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>
<p>Time commitment</p>	<p>The Board meets six to eight times each year with the Chair of the Board committed to a maximum of 104 days per year.</p> <p>By the nature of a non-executive 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 frequently attending events.</p>
<p>Length of appointment term</p>	<p>The term of appointment will be for four years.</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>
<p>Location of meetings</p>	<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 a frequent need for the Chair to attend industry meetings and events elsewhere including the Royal Highland Show in June each year.</p> <p>Meetings in 2027 will provisionally fall on the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 January • 18 February • 22 April

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 June • 23 September • 4 November
<p>Disqualifications</p>	<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>A member of the Scottish Parliament cannot also hold a public appointment for public bodies listed in the Schedule to the Scottish Parliament (Disqualification) Order 2025.</p> <p>Former Ministers and senior civil servants (Director General level and above) should ensure they comply with any applicable business appointment rules and if needed, seek advice from The Public Appointment’s Team at Public.appointments@gov.scot 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 Prime Scottish 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 Prime Scottish 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.

The Chair Role

The Chair of QMS is responsible for leading the Board in the setting of strategic and cultural direction for the organisation, as well as maintaining key relationships with our wide stakeholder community including Farmers and their representatives, Red Meat Processors and their representatives, Government and Consumers.

The operational work of the organisation is delivered by around 35 QMS staff led by the Chief Executive, Sarah Millar.

Further information

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

The selection panel

Chair	George Burgess – Director of Agriculture & Rural Economy, Scottish Government
Panel member	Kate Rowell – Chair of Quality Meat Scotland
Independent panel member	Ian McWatt - Deputy CEO & Director of Policy, Science and Operations, Food Standards 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 this position 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.

Applicants need to evidence all elements of the essential criteria:

Essential Criteria	Example Indicators	Assessment
<p>1. Understanding of QMS alongside experience in the red meat sector in Scotland, with expertise in one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beef production; • sheep production; • pig production; • red meat processing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understands QMS’s role as a Non-Departmental Public Body, including its accountability to levy payers and its statutory and operational responsibilities. • understands QMS’s engagement with the media/ political stakeholders, and the wider red meat sector in Scotland. • evidences innovation, performance improvement and/or engagement with the industry. 	<p>Application: Please record and submit a 3-minute video that provides evidence against criterion 1.</p> <p>Interview: If shortlisted, you will also be asked questions at interview.</p>

<p>2. Leading a Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides clear focus and ensures an organisation or business achieves its objectives; • encourages all group members to make an effective contribution and ensures a group works collaboratively to reach consensus; • inspires others and gains respect; • is committed to equality of opportunity and to developing and maintaining a diverse board. 	<p>Application: Please provide written evidence of no more than 300 words.</p> <p>Interview: If shortlisted, you will also be asked questions at interview.</p>
<p>3. Strategic Direction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has contributed to the successful development of a strategy • ensures effective governance at board level; • has an understanding of audit and risk management and can demonstrate effective practical application of that understanding. • demonstrates effective oversight of organisational performance, including holding the Chief Executive to account for delivering agreed outcomes and managing risk. • understands the wider regulatory and operating environment in which public bodies work, and uses this to inform sound judgement 	<p>Application: Please provide written evidence of no more than 300 words.</p> <p>Interview: If shortlisted, you will also be asked questions at interview.</p>
<p>4. The Levy System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a sound understanding and in-depth knowledge of the Levy System, and its application/use within QMS. 	<p>Application: Please provide written evidence of no more than 300 words.</p> <p>Interview: If shortlisted, you will also be asked</p>

		questions at interview.
5. Communication and Influencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively represents and promotes an organisation to a wide range of stakeholders, e.g. politicians, the media – acts as an ambassador; successfully influences senior level colleagues and stakeholders and is able to sell the objectives/benefits to a wide range of stakeholders. shows personal commitment and enthusiasm for the organisation’s purpose 	<p>Application: This criterion will be tested holistically across your application.</p> <p>Interview: If shortlisted, you will take part in a role play exercise. This will be held online on 22 September 2026.</p>

Tailored Career History
<p>In addition, you will also be asked to provide a <u>tailored</u> career history. This should include information from your professional, personal and voluntary experience which is relevant to this role. This should be no more than 500 words. You may wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dates Information about the organisation Information about your role and experience

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. Provide written evidence for Criteria 2, 3 and 4 (no more than 300 words per response)
3. Complete the Tailored Career History (no more than 500 words)
4. Submit your online application.
5. After submission, you must provide a prerecorded 3 minute video addressing Essential Criterion 1. Record your video using a phone, tablet, or computer and send it by email to public.appointments@gov.scot.

Recording your video submission

When preparing your video, please consider the following guidance to help you present your best response:

- Keep it focused and structured: Clearly address Essential Criterion 1. You may find it helpful to outline key points in advance.
- Choose a quiet, well-lit space: Ensure your face is clearly visible, with minimal background noise or distraction.
- Speak clearly and at a steady pace: Take your time, and pause briefly between points if needed.
- Check sound and video quality before recording your final version.
- Keep within the stated time limit of 3 minutes
- Review before sending: Watch your recording to confirm you are satisfied with both the content and quality.

Important information

PLEASE NOTE: You will not be able to edit your application once you click 'Submit'. You must ensure all information is complete and accurate before submitting.

We strongly recommend drafting your answers in a Word document first. This allows you to review and refine your responses before copying and pasting them into the online application form.

Once submitted, you will not be able to update your answers. Late applications will not be accepted by the selection panel.

If you use assistive technology, please contact the Public Appointments Team to request an accessible application form 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. Candidates invited to interview will be required to participate in a practical assessment exercise designed to assess Essential Criterion 5 Communication and Influencing. The exercise will be facilitated on behalf of the selection panel by the Chief Executive of Quality Meat Scotland, Sarah Millar, together with representatives

of the Scottish Red Meat Resilience Group. The exercise will be recorded and provided to the selection panel in advance of the interview.

The selection panel will independently review the evidence from the exercise before reaching its own conclusions on candidate performance. Further information about the format of the exercise and the individuals involved in facilitating it will be provided to candidates who are invited to interview. This will ensure that any actual or perceived conflicts of interest can be identified and managed appropriately in line with the [Ethical Standards Commissioners Code of Practice for Public Appointments](#).

3. The selection panel will interview candidates and 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. 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 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.
6. 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 (“2018 Act”) was [published](#) on 26th June 2025 following the Supreme Court Judgment dated 16 April 2025 on the definition of “Man”, “Woman” and “Sex” in the Equality Act 2010, and consequently in the 2018 Act.

In order to comply with the 2018 Act, Scottish Government must now request data on biological sex as registered at birth from all applicants for Public Appointments on Boards which are captured by the 2018 Act. Following your application you will receive a request from the Public Appointments Team to request this data from you. 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.

	<p>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).</p>
<p>Do I need to provide an email address and contact details at application stage?</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>How will my personal information be handled?</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Can I get feedback on my application or interview?</p>	<p>Yes. Feedback is available on request.</p>
<p>Is any training provided if I am offered and take up an appointment?</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Can I apply for a Chair role on a board if I have already been a member of that board?</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Is it possible to hold more than one public appointment?</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Are public appointments announced?</p>	<p>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.</p>

	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](#)

