

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



The Minister for Agriculture, Marine and the Islands is seeking to appoint up to four new 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	Friday 25 September 2026 – at 17:00
Sift of applications	14 October 2026
When applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	W/C 19 October 2026
Interviews	Interviews will be in person at Saughton House, Edinburgh on 26 and 27 October and 9 November 2026. Please keep these dates available. It is unlikely that we will be able to offer an alternative interview date.
Ministerial decision	W/C 30 November 2026
Estimated start date	1 April 2027

July 2026

Dear applicant,

Appointment of Member to the Board of Quality Meat Scotland

Many thanks for your interest in the Member roles.

We are looking for four new Members who possesses a range of skills and experience, to start their appointment on 1 April 2027. Successful candidates will be informed in late 2026.

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 contribute in meeting the Board's 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	Members receive £221.36 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. The appointment is non-pensionable.
Time commitment	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 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.
Length of appointment term	The term of appointment will be for four years. 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.
Location of meetings	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. There will be an occasional need for Members to attend industry meetings and events elsewhere including the Royal Highland Show in June each year. Meetings in 2027 will provisionally fall on the following dates: • 22 April • 24 June

	• 23 September • 4 November
Disqualifications	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. 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. 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. 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 Appointments Team at Public.appointments@gov.scot before applying for this role.

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, Butchers 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 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 four new board members.

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

Levy Payers

It is written in legislation that at least 50% of Board Members must be levy payers*. As there are already sufficient levy payers on the board to meet this criterion, being a levy payer will neither advantage nor disadvantage candidates for the appointments being made in this round.

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.

*‘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).

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.

The Minister is seeking to appoint up to four new Board Members across the two roles outlined below:

- **Role 1:** Candidates must demonstrate knowledge and experience of pig production (Priority Criterion 1), together with the general board skills set out in Essential Criteria 1-3.
- **Role 2:** Candidates must demonstrate the general board skills set out in Essential Criteria 1-3.

Applicants wishing to be considered for **Role 1** will automatically be considered for **Role 2**. Applicants applying for **Role 1** who do not wish to be considered for **Role 2** should email public.appointments@gov.scot to opt out of consideration for that role.

Please note that, for **Role 1**, the Priority Criterion is weighted as more significant than the Essential Criteria. Of the candidates who meet the Essential Criteria, those that provide the strongest evidence on the Priority Criterion will be considered most able to fulfil the role.

The Minister will appoint a combination of candidates as Board Members who together most closely meet the criteria in order to achieve the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience on the Board.

Please follow the instructions given below regarding which criteria you need to provide evidence for in your online application.

Priority Criterion

Applicants applying for **Role 1** must meet the Priority Criterion.

Priority Criterion	Example Indicators	Assessment
1. Knowledge and experience of pig production	- evidence of innovation, performance improvement, and/or engagement with wider industry. - current understanding of opportunities, risks and innovation needs affecting the sector.	Application: Please provide written evidence of no more than 300 words. Interview: If shortlisted, you will also be asked questions at interview.

Essential Criteria

Applicants applying for **Role 1** and/or **Role 2** must meet all the Essential Criteria. Example indicators are given to assist you with your application, you do not need to cover each one. **Please note you do not need to provide a written response to Essential Criterion 3 in your application.**

Essential Criteria	Example Indicators	Assessment
1. Understanding of QMS and the wider Scottish red meat sector	- understands QMS's role as a Non-Departmental Public Body, including its accountability to levy payers and its role and responsibilities. - understands QMS's engagement with stakeholders, and the wider red meat sector in Scotland. - Understands the challenges and opportunities for the sector. Employment in the sector would be beneficial but is not essential.	Application: Please provide written evidence of no more than 300 words. Interview: If shortlisted, you will also be asked questions at interview. There will also be a practical exercise which will assess all essential criteria.

2. Ability to contribute effectively to the Board at a strategic level	• Ability to analyse information, exercise sound judgement and provide constructive support and challenge as part of a collective Board. • 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.	Application: Please provide written evidence of no more than 300 words. Interview: If shortlisted, you will also be asked questions at interview. There will also be a practical exercise which will assess all essential criteria.
3. Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with a range of stakeholders	• 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 seek their feedback.	Application: This criterion will be tested holistically across your application. Interview: If shortlisted, there will be a practical exercise which will assess all essential criteria.

Tailored Career History

In addition, you will also be asked to provide a tailored 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:

- Dates
- Information about the organisation
- Information about your role and experience

How to apply online

1. Download and save this applicant information pack to refer to.
2. Read the 'person specification' section in this pack and write your responses to the criteria and tailored career history, noting the absolute word and page limits.
3. Save a copy of your criteria responses and tailored career history to your device.
4. Navigate back to the job advert and click 'apply'.
5. Complete the personal information and conflict of interest questions.
6. When prompted, provide evidence against the relevant box for the Priority Criterion (if applying for Role 1), and Essential Criteria 1 and 2 and your Tailored career history. Please note that each response for the priority and essential criteria must not exceed 300 words and the tailored career history must not exceed 500 words.
7. Submit your online application by 17:00 on 25 September 2026.

Please Note: you do not have the option to edit your application once you click 'submit'. You must have all your information 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 any content exceeding the stated word limits will not be considered by the selection panel.

Late applications will not be accepted by the selection panel.

The online system has been extensively tested for compatibility with a range of assistive technologies. However, should you experience any difficulties accessing or using the system, please contact the Public Appointments Team 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. The selection panel will interview candidates, the questions they ask will relate directly to the criteria for appointment. There will also be a practical exercise which will assess all the essential criteria.
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.

Media checks for candidates invited to interview

The selection panel may consider publicly available information about candidates, including posts on social media platforms. 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 sets a gender representation objective that 50% of non-executive members of public boards should be women.

Where two or more candidates are assessed as equally qualified for appointment, and at least one candidate is a woman and one is not, section 4(3) of the Act requires the appointing Minister to appoint the woman where this would help the board achieve, or make progress towards achieving, the gender representation objective*.

Once you apply, the Scottish Government will write to you to collect the required information regarding your sex.

*To note, under section 4(4) of the Act, the appointing Minister may instead appoint a candidate who is not a woman where another characteristic or circumstance appropriately justifies doing so.

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?	Yes. You can request to attend the interview using MS teams. Please contact the Public Appointments Team. Email: Public.appointments@gov.scot
Will you reimburse expenses for attending an interview?	Yes. You can claim reasonable expenses. A claim form will be issued with your invitation to interview, along with instructions.
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?	Yes. You must provide your contact details, including an email address, when submitting your application. This information is required so that we can contact you regarding your application and, if you are successful, to support the appointment process. As part of the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) requirements, the Scottish Government may need to verify the identity and credentials of candidates who are recommended for appointment. Contact details are also needed by the public body to arrange induction. Applications submitted without the required contact information 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. You can request feedback. Candidates have 20 working days from the date of notification of the outcome of their application to make the request in writing.
Is any training provided if I am offered and take up an appointment?	Yes. Each board has their own induction process and training offer, they will make contact directly should you be appointed. New appointees are also invited to attend

	an induction day hosted by the Public Bodies Support Unit of the Scottish Government.
Is it possible to hold more than one public appointment?	Yes. It is possible to have more than one public appointment. However, please check the disqualification section in this pack for further details related to this specific board. You should also 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](#)