

Glasgow Kelvin College**Board of Management Meeting of 30 August 2023****Wither's, Hayward, and Scottish Government's Purpose & Principles – Update Report****Report by Principal****1. Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to provide Members of the Board with the latest information relating to three reviews which have potential to significantly change the education and skills system in Scotland.

- The Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape (Withers) seeks, amongst other things, to create one single funding body for Scotland resulting in Skills Development Scotland (SDS) refocusing as a national careers service.
- The Independent Review of Qualifications (Hayward) seeks to reform predominantly school-based qualifications and to introduce a new Scottish Diploma of Achievement (SDA).
- The Purpose and Principles for Post School Education and Research sets out the Scottish Government's (SG's) five principles for the tertiary sector and its immediate priorities for change.

An overview of the three main reviews that have been finalised over the summer period is provided.

2. Background

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) published its report, *Coherent Provision and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education and Research* in June 2021, in which it identified that funding models across the education system were not fit for purpose and were unsustainable. It also highlighted the lack of a coherent lifelong learning journey. Audit Scotland published its report *Planning for Skills* in January 2022 within which the Auditor General, Stephen Boyle, issued a scathing review of SG's performance with regards to providing the skills so badly needed by the Scottish economy. The SG went on to set out its National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) in March 2022 which recommended a new culture of delivery where partners come together to deliver the skills needed to transform the Scottish economy.

Two reports (2021) from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recommended further coherence of the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), and for the reform of qualifications for upper secondary assessments.

The three reviews – Withers, Hayward and Purposes & Principles were commissioned to start the process of system wide reform across lifelong learning and skills.

The Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape (Withers), focused on the delivery of skills in Scotland and the Purpose and Principles (SG) drew on some of the recommendations to put forward its immediate priorities.

The Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment built on the recommendations of the Muir Report, *Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education, June 2021*, which recommended abolishing the Scottish Qualifications Authority,

3. Withers, Hayward, and Scottish Government's Purpose & Principles Reviews

- **Withers Review:**
Fit for the Future: developing a post-school learning system to fuel economic transformation, Skills Delivery Landscape Review – Final Report
- **Hayward Review:**
It's Our Future: Report of the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment
- **Scottish Government's Purpose & Principles:**
Purpose and Principles for Post-School Education, Research and Skills, Scottish Government, June 2023
Supporting documents, Post-school education, research and skills, Outcomes for the Purpose and Principles, Scottish Government, June 2023

Withers Review: Skills Delivery Landscape

The report of James Withers' Independent Review of the Skills Delivery Landscape outlines recommendations to ensure the public sector can meet the level of economic transformation expected in the years ahead. The report puts forward major structural reforms to the current way skills are delivered in Scotland.

Key structural recommendations made by Withers include:

- The creation of a new single funding and delivery body, bringing together functions from Skills Development Scotland (SDS), the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and, possibly, the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS);
- giving the enterprise agencies a clear remit for supporting businesses, with workforce planning as an embedded and integrated part of business development and planning, and encouraging a regional economic as well as national economic approach to skills;

- ensuring there is a clear remit for the new qualifications body – the successor to the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) - in overseeing development and accreditation of all publicly funded post-school qualifications;
- moving responsibility for national skills strategic planning to the SG;
- reforming SDS to create a new body with a singular focus on careers advice and education.

Members wishing more detail can find Colleges Scotland's (CS's), sector response to the Withers Review at [Appendix 1](#). The full set of recommendations and supporting detail can be found at ***Fit for the Future: developing a post-school learning system to fuel economic transformation, Skills Delivery Landscape Review – Final Report***

Hayward Review: Review of Qualifications and Assessment

The Independent Review was established for the four main reasons listed below:

- Society is changing and Scotland needs to look to the future and consider whether the current qualifications and assessment system is fit for purpose;
- the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted dissatisfaction with Scotland's qualifications, and following the cancellation of examinations in 2020 and 2021, and the alternative approaches taken to National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications, there was public concern about fairness and widespread dissatisfaction with results and perceptions of inequity;
- the evidence emerging from two OECD reports (OECD, 2021, Stobart, 2021) indicated a need for change in the Senior Phase; and
- a longer-term dissatisfaction within Scotland about differences between the original intentions for Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) qualifications and learners' experiences of them.

The Review was concerned with Senior Phase qualifications in schools, colleges and wider educational settings. The focus was predominantly learners aged 15-18 in all educational settings. Professor Louise Hayward set out twenty-six key recommendations regarding the qualifications system in Scotland and how it can best support learners in schools and colleges. One of the recommendations which the college sector will have a role to play is recommendation to introduce a Scottish Diploma of Achievement (SDA) with three elements: Personal Pathway, Programmes of Learning and Project Learning.

It is recommended that the SDA is used as a graduation certificate for all Senior Phase pupils and the following criteria should be used as a starting point for the further development of the Diploma:

- All learners must be offered the chance to experience learning in respect of all elements of the Diploma. This should be viewed as an entitlement;

- the overall Diploma should not be graded. It should be awarded when achievements are recognised in each element, Programmes of Learning, Project Learning and the Personal Pathway;
- the Diploma will be awarded at point of exit and will include achievements gathered to that stage. This will include, qualifications, awards, credit accumulated and learner reflections on their personal learning through the Personal Pathway;
- the three elements of the Diploma should not be weighted. All elements are important as evidence of breadth of achievement;
- the Diploma, and the evidence within it, will move with the learner to be built on in college, employment, university and the voluntary sector;
- if a learner does not show evidence of learning in all three elements, the Diploma will not be awarded. They will leave with a record of what they have achieved. It will be possible to undertake learning at a later stage to allow for the award to be made; and
- all learners should leave with a digital profile.

It is also advised that there should be equal recognition of all qualifications at the same Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level with the same credit points and that the system should use the SCQF Level followed by the name of the qualification in promotional literature and in recording of results.

Members wishing more detail can find Colleges Scotland's (CS's), sector response to the Hayward Review at [Appendix 2](#). The full set of recommendations and supporting detail can be found at ***It's Our Future: Report of the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment***

Scottish Government's Purpose and Principles

This Scottish Government review intends to set out a framework that sets the policy direction and shapes delivery priorities to establish a lifelong education, research and skills system to fit the needs of the people of Scotland.

The report outlines five principles to support the following purpose of,

"To develop new thinking, products and systems through research and to ensure that people, at every stage in life, have the opportunity and means to develop the skills, knowledge, values and attributes to fulfil their potential and to make a meaningful contribution to society."

Each of the following five principles have initial priorities that will be implemented, and both the Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment and the Independent Skills Delivery Landscape Review appear to have informed these priorities.

- Principle 1 - Transparent, Resilient and Trusted

To lead the development of a new model of public funding for all forms of provision.

To investigate the options to deliver a single funding body, including tuition and living cost support, paying regard to issues such as the status and scope of the body's responsibilities.

To include responsibility for overseeing all publicly funded post school qualifications (except degrees) and the underpinning occupational standards and skills frameworks as part of the new qualifications body.

- Principle 2 – Supportive and Equitable

Within financial constraints, build on manifesto commitments and undertake a review of student support for part-time learners to improve the parity of support on offer, especially for those who are returning to learning and may have other caring or work-related responsibilities.

Develop a model for student support and engagement that takes account of all provision pathways and not just further and higher education, including considering apprenticeships and CLD.

- Principle 3 – High Quality

Build on the work of the recommendations from the Careers Review to consider options for embedding careers advice and education within communities, educational settings and workplaces across Scotland; including options for future delivery of national careers services.

Build a comprehensive understanding of the post-school qualifications landscape to inform processes for developing, funding, assuring and approving publicly funded qualifications, and actions for wider reform of the qualifications landscape - including improved articulation with the senior phase.

Lead work to inform our future approach to apprenticeship development and delivery as part of an integrated landscape of pathways.

Work with institutions, public bodies and unions to ensure that staff at all levels are supported and empowered to deliver the high-quality work required by students, society and the wellbeing economy, in keeping with fair work principles.

- Principle 4 – Globally Respected

Use and improve Study in Scotland materials as part of our approach though NSET to talent attraction and retention.

Take forward a pilot international mobility programme co-designed with sector representatives.

Continue to seek to influence the UK Government to secure our future association to Horizon Europe and other EU research programmes and ensure Scottish interests are protected regardless of outcome.

- Principle 5 – Agile and Responsive

To take responsibility for skills planning – developing an approach at a national level that works with partners to set clear priorities.

Enhance and embed the role of employers in shaping system planning priorities, pathways and provision.

This will be supported by a regional approach that builds on existing regional economic partnerships and has employers and local providers, in particular colleges, at the centre.

Members wishing more detail can find Colleges Scotland's (CS's), sector response to the SG's Purpose & Principles at [Appendix 3](#). The full set of recommendations and supporting detail can be found at ***Purpose and Principles for Post-School Education, Research and Skills, Scottish Government, June 2023*** and ***Supporting documents, Post-school education, research and skills, Outcomes for the Purpose and Principles, Scottish Government, June 2023***

4. Resource Implications

The most significant implication for resource is the Withers review and by response the SG's Purpose and Principles review. As presented in the paper there are a range of far reaching structural, strategic, and funding propositions which may offer opportunity to move towards a sustainable model of funding for colleges. But on the other hand a drive towards radical change which is not empowered by appropriate resourcing could render those ambitions fruitless and indeed deteriorate resourcing further. At this stage we await detailed response and plan of action for change from the SG.

5. Impact on Students

The Hayward review may result in considerable change in some qualifications for young people in their "senior phase". This will almost exclusively effect college enrolled school pupils engaging in Foundation Apprenticeships or their replacement, or senior phase provision by colleges in support of pupils gaining their Scottish Diploma of Achievement.

Adoption of recommendations from the Withers review would significantly change skills and educational delivery within colleges and therefore our students in terms of access, choice, support and many other areas. Ultimately we hope for the better but such reform would present significant transitional challenges.

6. Risk and Assurance

There is a risk that the SG will pick over the recommendations and miss essential elements which considerably reduce any intended impact. If no suitable and sustainable resource is provided then ambitions will not be realized.

7. Equality

No negative impacts on people with protected characteristics have been identified because of this paper.

8. Data Protection

There are no direct data protection implications because of this paper.

9. Environmental and Sustainability

No negative impacts on environmental sustainability have been identified because of this paper.

10. Recommendations

Members are recommended to note the contents of this update report.

11. Further Information

Members can obtain further information on the contents of this report from Derek Smeall, Principal dsmeall@glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Glasgow Kelvin College
DSm
23 August 2023