

# Engagement Webinar

Ken Muir

Independent Advisor to the Scottish  
Government on the Reform of the SQA  
and Education Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/education-reform/>

EducationReform@gov.scot

## Recommendations from OECD report

- Re-assess CfE's aspirational vision against emerging trends in education
- Find a better balance between breadth and depth of learning throughout CfE
- Adapt the Senior Phase to match the vision of CfE
- Continue building curricular capacity at various levels of the system using research, collaboration, experimentation
- Ensure stable, purposeful and impactful stakeholder involvement with CfE
- **Revise the division of responsibilities for CfE**
- Structure a coherent communication strategy to support developments of CfE

## Recommendations from OECD report

- Provide dedicated time to lead, plan and support CfE at the school level
- **Simplify policies and institutions for clarity and coherence, inc. explore assigning leadership and development responsibilities for curriculum (and perhaps assessment) to a specialist stand-alone agency; and consider refreshing the remit of an inspectorate of education regarding CfE**
- Align curriculum, qualifications and system evaluation to deliver on the commitment of Building the Curriculum 5
- Develop a systematic approach to curriculum review
- Adopt a structured and long-term approach to implementation of report's recommendations

# My remit

....provide advice to the Scottish Government and the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills on aspects of education reform. This will include **designing the implementation of the OECD's recommendations for structural and functional change of SQA and Education Scotland**. It will include the delivery of the national curriculum, assessment, qualification and inspection functions, and recognise and include the wider functions of both these bodies.

# Expert Panel

- This group of individuals have been selected by me to support me on the delivery on my remit.
- The individuals have both broad understanding of education and/or change management/organisational design and specific expertise in areas that I consider will be useful to me in progressing my work.

# Practitioner and Stakeholder Advisory Group

- This large group comprises individuals representing almost 50 organisations who are most likely to be affected to some degree by the reform programme.
- As such, they are most likely to have views and ideas on what reform might look like as well as the practical considerations and implications of any proposed changes.

# Timescale

- August 2021 to January 2022 (6 months)
- Report to Cab Sec - early 2022
  
- Expert Panel meetings – end August + early Sept.
- Practitioner+Stakeholder Advisory Group (PSAG) – mid-September + mid-November
- Ongoing engagement and feedback from PSAG members
- Early meetings with SQA + Education Scotland + other key bodies - ongoing as required
- Sept/Oct – meetings with PSAG organisations
- Mid-Nov - PSAG sub-group meetings
- Late Nov/early December – report drafting

# Engagement Opportunities

- PSAG members meetings – 90-minute slots Sept/Oct + 10 early Nov.
- National Consultation [including bespoke engagement with children & young people] – Sept/Oct/Nov <https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/education-reform/>
- Twilight webinars (16:30-18:00) – 27 and 30 September; 6 and 28 October
- Attendance at Education Governance Groups – Sept to Nov
- Inputs at conferences/seminars
- Direct submissions to Education Reform email box  
[EducationReform@gov.scot](mailto:EducationReform@gov.scot)
  
- OECD report on Assessment by Prof. Gordon Stobart
- RICs report by Research Scotland – end October

# Comments & Questions - Session 1: Vision

Since the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence, there have been marked changes in educational research giving rise to new insights into children and young people's learning, pedagogy, and the kind of knowledge, skills and attitudes students need to progress as learners.

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the vision for Curriculum for Excellence reflects what matters for the education of children and young people in Scotland?
2. What do you think should be retained and/or changed?

# Comments & Questions - Session 2: Curriculum & Assessment

The two OECD reports make it clear that aligning curriculum, qualifications and system evaluation is essential to delivering on the commitments made in Curriculum for Excellence relating to assessment.

## **To what extent do you agree or disagree that...**

3. Curriculum for Excellence provides a coherent progression in the journey of learners (3-18 and beyond)?
4. Learning communities are empowered and use the autonomy provided by Curriculum for Excellence?
5. The creation of a Curriculum and Assessment Agency will help to address the misalignment of curriculum and assessment as outlined in the OECD report?
6. The full breadth of SQA qualifications play an important part of the curriculum offered by secondary schools?
7. Technologies are fully and appropriately utilised to support learning and deliver assessments?

# Comments & Questions - Session 3: Roles & Responsibilities

A key challenge in improving the transparency of responsibilities and accountability mechanisms surrounding Curriculum for Excellence is in ensuring that the functions of agencies are designed in a way that maximises support for achieving excellence and equity for all children and young people from the early level upwards.

## **To what extent do you agree or disagree that...**

8. There is clarity on where the responsibilities for the strategic direction, review and updates for Curriculum for Excellence lie?
9. There is clarity on the roles played by national bodies and other providers for responding to needs for support with curriculum and assessment issues?
10. There is clarity on where high quality support for leadership and professional learning can be accessed to support practitioners?
11. There is sufficient trust with all stakeholders, including children, young people, parents & carers, so they are genuinely involved in decision making?
12. Independent inspection has an important role to play in scrutiny and evaluation, enhancing improvement and building capacity?

# Comments & Questions - Session 4: Replacing SQA and Reforming Education Scotland

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills announced in June 2021 the intention to replace the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and consider a new specialist agency for both curriculum and assessment while also taking forward reform to Education Scotland, including removing the function of inspection or scrutiny from the agency. This section seeks views on how best to take forward key aspects of the Cabinet Secretary's decision including:

- Removing scrutiny (inspection and review) from Education Scotland
- Further reform of Education Scotland
- Replacing SQA
- Considering the establishment of a new Curriculum and Assessment Agency

**Do you have any comments or suggestions on these proposed reforms in terms of:**

13. the opportunities these reforms could present; and
14. the risks associated with any reform?