

**From:** Taylor A (Alison)  
**Sent:** 10 June 2021 17:52  
**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
**Cc:** DG Education & Justice; Director of Learning; McLean L (Liza); Drought A (Andrew); Anson S (Sam); Pentland MK (Malcolm); Wilson M (Mick);  
**[Redacted]**  
**Subject:** Submission - educational reform and the OECD report - 100621  
**Importance:** High

**[Redacted]**

Please find attached further advice following recent discussion with the Cabinet Secretary on the reform of Education Scotland and the SQA, and the upcoming statement on the OECD report (attached and at this eRDM link: [Education Reform - Next steps - Follow up submission \(A33588756\)](#)).

I am sending up on behalf of my colleague Liza McLean, whose division has led on the advice.

Thanks  
Alison

**Alison Taylor** | Deputy Director: Improvement, Attainment and Wellbeing | Learning Directorate  
**[Redacted]**



## OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

### EDUCATION REFORM – NEXT STEPS

10 June 2020

#### Purpose

1. To provide further advice following discussion on next steps on the reform of Education Scotland and SQA, and the upcoming statement on the OECD report.
2. The Cabinet Secretary requested:
  - Further work to clarify the narrative on the purpose of reform;
  - Stakeholder views;
  - Potential professional/independent advisors;
  - Information on the RICs;
  - Consideration and options on inspection; and
  - Suggested timeline.

#### Further advice

3. We have reviewed the narrative and provide a further version at **Annex A**, trying to give a greater focus on the purpose of delivering improved outcomes for children and young people.
4. A collation of public and private stakeholder views is provided at **Annex B**. In summary, there is broad support of the need for reform of the national agencies, but the devil will be in the detail of what it is proposed to be done and how we go about the process of engagement. **[Redacted]**.
5. **[Redacted]**
6. We have been considering, including taking views from stakeholders, who could be well placed to take on a professional/independent advisor role to lead on the implementation of the recommendation on the agencies. Short profiles on suggestions is provided at **Annex C**. As discussed with the Cabinet Secretary earlier this week, we know that those working in education have strong views on, and value, credibility and would want someone with lived experience of teaching and previous experience of senior or system leadership in education.
7. It is therefore difficult to fall on any one person but we think that potentially Professor Ken Muir may be the best and most suitable candidate (recently retired as Chief Executive of the General Teaching Council for Scotland with a career spanning more than 40 years in education, also previously HM Chief Inspector of Education, and currently Honorary Professor at the University of the West of Scotland). Professor Muir is a highly respected and credible leader in Scottish education. His appointment is likely to be welcomed by the main education stakeholders, including the EIS. **[Redacted]**
8. **[Redacted]** This was the approach taken to the Feeley review and having extra voices involved did give extra credibility to the process.
9. **[Redacted]**
10. On the inspection function, **Annex D** provides some advice on potential options about how to address this in the statement.
11. We briefly discussed the Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs). A general further briefing on them is provided at **Annex E**. Whilst the formal report on the current evaluation of the RICs will not report formally until end August/September, we will receive early indications of

## OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

findings from the research team over the summer. This timing would still fit with the potential overall timeline proposed below, and would enable us to indicate that we are reviewing the RICs and that they will also form part of how we are considering what reform is needed regionally and local.

### Timeline

12. If the Cabinet Secretary is content to accept the OECD recommendation on structural reform on 22 June, consultation activity could begin relatively quickly and run over the next 4-5 months, to account for the summer holiday. This process would include a formal written consultation and comms strategy aimed at gathering views from as wide a group of interests as possible. This process would then aim to report back to you on clear next steps e.g. organisational set-up, functions, governance, staffing. At this point timelines would also need to be established for implementation.

### Conclusion

13. The Cabinet Secretary is invited to provide views on next steps. We can then also package up this and our previous advice in to a note in support of a meeting with the First Minister.

Liza McLean  
Learning Directorate: Workforce, Infrastructure and Reform  
**[Redacted]**

## Annex A – Narrative on Education Reform

Taking on board the Cabinet Secretary's comments, we have worked further on the purpose of reform.

### Why reform?

The Scottish Government's aspiration is that all children in Scotland should have the best start in life, and that there should be no better place in the world to be educated than in Scotland. To achieve this everyone in the education system needs to focus on improving outcomes for children and young people, and delivering excellence and equity.

The global pandemic has both created new challenges and brought existing challenges in to even sharper relief. Curriculum for Excellence remains the right foundation for education in Scotland, but in order to realise its full potential we need to increase the pace of improvement, tackle unwarranted variation in outcomes, and support and empower schools and teachers as the people who know their learners best.

### What are we reforming?

The education system needs to be fully focused and organised in the right way in order to do everything it can to provide the highest quality of support for schools.

If schools are to become key decision makers in the system, then we need to consider potential changes in the balance of power between layers: national and local government; national agencies; education authorities; and schools, and/or if efficiencies can be made within these layers.

Our two key national agencies, the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Education Scotland, play significant roles in this landscape and in how schools are supported and challenged, and we are therefore starting this process with a focus on reform nationally. It is important that teachers, parents and learners themselves trust the organisations responsible for supporting our schools and understand the role that they play.

### How will we reform?

The forthcoming OECD report will provide us with guiding recommendations, based on their wide review, consultation, expertise and knowledge of both the Scottish and international education systems.

We will take these recommendations forward through wide engagement, ensuring that the voices of children, young people, parents and schools themselves are at the heart of our approach in the way these recommendations are implemented.

We will work with openness and transparency, with a key objective of ensuring that we fully understand the needs of our schools, practitioners and learners and design our education system to deliver the best possible support and, as appropriate, challenge that they require.

### Measuring impact

The National Improvement Framework sets out activity the Scottish Government and partners will take to drive improvement for children and young people, and we will be considering whether its current measures continue to be comprehensive and appropriate. Our programme of reform will be clearly aligned to delivering the pace and progress needed on the outcomes we want to achieve over the next 5 years.

## Annex B – Stakeholder Views

### Private Views

#### [Redacted]

International Council of Education Advisers (ICEA), December 2021:

*Challenge is a dynamic force within a system; not simply external pressure on that system. Scotland has avoided many of the negative high-stakes effects of excessive and inappropriate forms of top-down challenge that characterize a number of other systems. But the need for greater dynamism and challenge within the Scottish system remains. Many recent initiatives in Scotland such as the appointment of Challenge Advisors to support, stretch and strengthen Regional Improvement Collaboratives have the potential to realise this necessary dynamism, but they may require still further strengthening.*

*and*

*A lesson from this crisis is the need to rely less on policy-driven education reforms, and more on practical and powerful ideas with track records of proven success across sectors to improve learning, wellbeing and health in different educational settings. Collaboration, not just coordination between education and health, and networked improvement of children's lives (through learning and health) will be more successful than the imposition of independently mandated reforms by authorities in different sectors. In short, the respective roles of national and local government and of intermediate agencies need to be reviewed after the pandemic to ensure they enhance inclusion, responsiveness, agility and collaboration in an effective post pandemic system that benefits all young people in Scotland. This is not just a statement of philosophy, or a plea for additional resources and initiatives. It calls for a shift in resource allocation from central government and agencies to regional and community-based authorities.*

Audit Scotland, Improving Outcomes for Young people through School Education, March 2021:

*Education Scotland should work with schools, councils and RICs to:*

- understand the factors that cause variation in performance across schools and councils*
- achieve greater consistency in applying the NIF drivers through a targeted response that reflects local priorities for improvement, with a focus on reducing inequalities*
- ensure the successful innovation and learning from the Covid-19 response, such as the opportunities from using digital learning, informs future planning for improved outcomes for children and young people.*

Commission on School Reform, Education Manifesto for 2021 and Beyond<sup>1</sup>, April 2021:

- [Redacted]**
- An independent inspectorate should be established, overseen by a board independent of government influence and answerable to Parliament. The focus of the inspectorate's activities should be as much on the effectiveness of policy as on its implementation at the level of the individual school or other establishment.*
- Strategic curriculum guidance should be developed collaboratively with extensive stakeholder involvement but should be seen clearly as the responsibility of government rather than a supposedly arms-length agency.*
- Resources available for developing advice and delivering support should be progressively devolved to school level, allowing school staff to select those providers who they see as offering the best quality service.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://reformscotland.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/An-Education-Manifesto-for-2021-and-beyond.pdf>

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### Annex C – Professional/Independent Advisor

Previous advice explored the establishment of advisory role or external chair that would help us engage the sector and design a new agency and inspection function. The table below provide names of individuals who could potentially undertake this role. While this list includes a number of senior Scottish educationalists we have also included some options from outwith education for balance and further discussion. As highlighted in the main submission above, if we choose one person, they could also have a wider group of advisors to draw upon.

Name	Background	Comments [REDACTEDs.38(1)(b)]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

### Annex D – Inspection

1. Having announced at the education debate on 3<sup>rd</sup> June that you will look to reform Education Scotland and the SQA, you may upon publication of the OECD report want to give an immediate response specifically on the role of the Inspectorate as part of future reform of Education Scotland. [Redacted]

2. [Redacted]

#### School inspections and the role of HMIE

3. The purpose of inspection and review in Scotland is to support improvement and to provide assurance on quality in Scottish Education. In order achieve this, inspections and reviews focus on three key areas:

- Providing assurance and public accountability
- Promoting improvement
- Informing the development of educational policy and practice

4. The inspectorate carries out inspections in the following sectors:

- early learning and childcare settings, including nursery classes in schools
- primary and secondary schools
- Gaelic Medium Education
- independent schools
- special and residential special schools
- community learning and development services
- education functions of local authorities
- educational psychology services
- publicly funded colleges
- private colleges and English language schools
- career information, advice and guidance services
- modern apprentice training
- prison education (at the request of HM Inspectorate of Prisons).

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5. How frequently an organisation is inspected depends on the sector. The Chief Inspector agrees the scale and priorities of the inspection and review programme in agreement with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills may also commission Education Scotland to carry out specific inspection and review activity. Inspectors may also carry out inspection and review activity in response to an analysis of risk.
6. Inspections have been paused during the COVID-19 pandemic to enable schools to concentrate on planning, organising and delivering learning for children and young people.

[Redacted]

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### Discussion

7. Broadly speaking, opinion among partners and stakeholders runs fairly hot on inspection, in relation to:
  - **its purpose, aims and objectives**; concerns about the methods and mechanisms used, reporting arrangements, balance of support and challenge, etc and how these could/should be revisited to optimise the role it can play in improving educational outcomes;
  - **the frequency of school inspection** – external commentators continue to raise concerns about, for instance, the fact that by June 2021 900 schools will have gone for more than a decade without an inspection. In addition there has been no cycle of inspections of local authority education functions for over 10 years; and
  - **responsibility for inspection sitting within Education Scotland** – many are strongly of the view that responsibility for inspection does not sit well in the body responsible for school improvement in Scotland [Redacted]
8. [Redacted]
9. [Redacted]
10. [Redacted]
11. [Redacted]
12. [Redacted]
13. [Redacted]
14. [Redacted]
15. [Redacted]

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### Annex E - Regional Improvement Collaboratives – Summary Brief

#### Background

As part of our education empowerment reforms, a commitment to establish Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) was set out in the Scottish Government paper [Education Governance: Next Steps](#), published in June 2017. This proposed that the overarching purpose of the RICs would be to:

- “provide excellent educational improvement support for headteachers, teachers and practitioners through dedicated teams of professionals, drawing on Education Scotland staff, local authority staff and others;
- provide coherent focus across all partners through delivery of an annual regional plan and associated work programme aligned with the National Improvement Framework;
- facilitate collaborative working across the region, including sharing best practice, supporting collaborative networks and pursuing partnership approaches; and to
- be led by a Regional Director, to be appointed by the Scottish Government and to report to the HM Chief Inspector/Chief Executive of Education Scotland.”

Following publication of the above, the detailed arrangements for their establishment and operation were developed by a joint Scottish Government/Local Government Steering Group, which delivered its recommendations to Ministers and COSLA Leaders in September 2017. Scottish Ministers and COSLA accepted the group’s recommendations and it was announced in October 2017 that a total of 6 RIC areas would be established across Scotland.

Regional Improvement Collaborative Leads were appointed to each RIC area by October 2017, the first outline regional improvement plans were submitted to the Chief Inspector of Education in January 2018, and a further, fuller iteration of their plans were submitted in September 2018. Up until the impact of Covid-19 in 2020, the RICs have provided annual plans to the Chief Inspector of Education in the summer/autumn.

It should be noted that 2 RIC areas were in place before 2017: the Northern Alliance and the Tayside Collaborative. Both informed and were brought into these arrangements when the remaining 4 RIC areas were established in October 2017. The 6 RIC areas are:

- The Forth Valley & West Lothian Collaborative
- The Northern Alliance
- The South East Improvement Collaborative
- The South West Improvement Collaborative
- The Tayside Collaborative
- The West Partnership

#### SG Funding to the RICs

Since their establishment, the Scottish Government has set aside a total of up to £21 million to support the Regional Improvement Collaboratives. This includes funding to create regional capacity for collaborative improvement and to support delivery of their regional improvement plans. This funding is comprised on: £5m in 2018/19; £6m in 2019/20; £4m in 2020/21<sup>2</sup>; and a commitment to provide a further £6m in the current financial year, to March 2022.

#### Summary progress and Impact

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<sup>2</sup> Due to Covid-19 and a realignment of RIC funding from school year to financial year, 20/21 SG support funding was provided over 8 months, thereby maintaining the £6m per annum funding levels of the previous and subsequent funding year.

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Each RIC has progressed steadily since their establishment. All have effective leadership, infrastructure and governance arrangements in place, and regional plans have continued to evolve, including in responding to the impacts of Covid-19. While the details differ in line with the each area's circumstance and approach, RIC plans include collaborative activity in areas such as: raising attainment and closing the gap, curriculum development and support, pupil health and wellbeing, e-learning and digital pedagogy, professional learning and leadership, moderation and assessment, collaborative networks, literacy and numeracy support.

While progress on regional planning and infrastructures can be evidenced, **[Redacted]**. Indeed, while a number of expert groups support the RICs as a vehicle to strengthen collaboration and resources across local authorities and with the national agencies, many have commented on the need for greater clarity and consistency on the RICs contribution and role. This includes, in particular, in relation to CfE and in addressing variability across local authority areas. **[Redacted]**

### Joint Work – Future RIC Development Options

The Scottish Government, Education Scotland, ADES, COSLA and the RICs are undertaking joint work to support the further and continued development of the RICs. This will deliver proposals to Scottish Ministers and COSLA Leaders later this year, to support discussions on future RIC sustainability and funding, strategic planning and areas of further development.

### Independent RIC Review

An independent review of the RICs co-commissioned by the Scottish Government and COSLA was paused in March 2020 following the Covid-19 closure of schools. This has recently recommenced, with fieldwork currently underway and a revised timetable to publish its findings in October 2021. These findings will be used to further inform advice to Ministers on the future options above.

Research Scotland have been commissioned to undertake this review and the areas under consideration are:

- RIC Structures and Governance
- Planning and Evaluation
- Collaboration and Partnership Working
- Use of Data
- Engagement with and Support for Schools
- National support and guidance (from Education Scotland and SG, including funding)

A central purpose of this review is to gather and assess further information on the reach and impact of the RICs into schools and classrooms, and Research Scotland will undertake around 50 interviews with schools across Scotland (1 or 2 in each LA area). They will also analyse available RIC progress reports, plans and other materials and information, and will undertake a further number of telephone/Teams interviews with regional, local authority and national stakeholders, including with Scottish Government and Education Scotland officials.

Many of the research interviews, including all interviews with schools, need to take place during term time. While as many as practicable will be carried out during June, a number will take place in August; this includes all secondary school interviews, as undertaking those in June was not considered practical in light of the impact of senior phase assessments on secondary school staff, resources and availability.

Fieldwork is therefore expected to conclude in late August, with main analysis of interviews and evidence taking place during September, for production of a draft review report in the first week in October. A final report is anticipated by end of October 2021. Officials will press for as early a sight of review findings as possible.

**From:** McLean L (Liza)  
**Sent:** 15 June 2021 10:32  
**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills; Taylor A (Alison)  
**Cc:** DG Education & Justice; Director of Learning; Drought A (Andrew); Anson S (Sam); Pentland MK (Malcolm); Wilson M (Mick); **[Redacted]**  
**Subject:** RE: Submission - educational reform and the OECD report - 100621

Hi **[Redacted]**,

Many thanks for this very helpful feedback. We are drafting the FM note on this basis and will aim to have something with you as early as we can tomorrow. The OECD recommendations table is currently being worked on and again we'll have that with you as soon as we can.

Ahead of that however, just to come back to Ms Somerville quickly on a few of the comments:

**[Redacted]**

**On implications of setting up new/different organisations:**

- **[Redacted]**
- **[Redacted].**
- **[Redacted].**
- **[Redacted].**
- **[Redacted].**

Liza McLean  
Interim Deputy Director, Learning Workforce, Infrastructure and Reform  
Learning Directorate  
Working from home – **[Redacted]**

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**From:** **[Redacted]**

**On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

**Sent:** 14 June 2021 15:08

**To:** Taylor A (Alison) <[Alison.Taylor@gov.scot](mailto:Alison.Taylor@gov.scot)>; Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <[CabSecES@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecES@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** DG Education & Justice <[dgej@gov.scot](mailto:dgej@gov.scot)>; Director of Learning <[DirectorofLearning@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorofLearning@gov.scot)>; McLean L (Liza) <[Liza.McLean@gov.scot](mailto:Liza.McLean@gov.scot)>; Drought A (Andrew) <[Andrew.Drought@gov.scot](mailto:Andrew.Drought@gov.scot)>; Anson S (Sam) <[Sam.Anson@gov.scot](mailto:Sam.Anson@gov.scot)>; Pentland MK (Malcolm) <[Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot](mailto:Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot)>; Wilson M

(Mick) <[Mick.Wilson@gov.scot](mailto:Mick.Wilson@gov.scot)>; [Redacted]; McAllister C (Colin) <[Colin.McAllister@gov.scot](mailto:Colin.McAllister@gov.scot)>  
**Subject:** RE: Submission - educational reform and the OECD report - 100621

Hi Alison,

Ms Somerville has made the following comments –

[Redacted]

Thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Deputy Private Secretary to Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills | T: [Redacted] | E:  
[cabsecES@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecES@gov.scot) | The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road, EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

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**From:** Taylor A (Alison) <[Alison.Taylor@gov.scot](mailto:Alison.Taylor@gov.scot)>

**Sent:** 10 June 2021 17:52

**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <[CabSecES@gov.scot](mailto:CabSecES@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** DG Education & Justice <[dgej@gov.scot](mailto:dgej@gov.scot)>; Director of Learning <[DirectorofLearning@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorofLearning@gov.scot)>;  
McLean L (Liza) <[Liza.McLean@gov.scot](mailto:Liza.McLean@gov.scot)>; Drought A (Andrew) <[Andrew.Drought@gov.scot](mailto:Andrew.Drought@gov.scot)>; Anson S  
(Sam) <[Sam.Ansongov.scot](mailto:Sam.Ansongov.scot)>; Pentland MK (Malcolm) <[Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot](mailto:Malcolm.Pentland@gov.scot)>; Wilson M  
(Mick) <[Mick.Wilson@gov.scot](mailto:Mick.Wilson@gov.scot)>; [Redacted]; [Colin.McAllister@gov.scot](mailto:Colin.McAllister@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** Submission - educational reform and the OECD report - 100621

**Importance:** High

[Redacted]

Please find attached further advice following recent discussion with the Cabinet Secretary on the reform of Education Scotland and the SQA, and the upcoming statement on the OECD report (attached and at this eRDM link: [Education Reform - Next steps - Follow up submission \(A33588756\)](#)).

I am sending up on behalf of my colleague Liza McLean, whose division has led on the advice.

Thanks

Alison

**Alison Taylor** | Deputy Director: Improvement, Attainment and Wellbeing | Learning Directorate

[Redacted]

 gov.scot

**From:** [REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 06 October 2021 11:16

**To:** [REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** FW: OECD report on SQA FMQ - due 2pm

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**From:** [REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** 15 June 2021 11:31

**To:**

**Cc:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <[ETFMQPQ@gov.scot](mailto:ETFMQPQ@gov.scot)>; [REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** RE: OECD report on SQA FMQ - due 2pm

[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

Many thanks all.

Appreciate there's an element of duplication, some unavoidable some probably avoidable. For this week FMQ can I suggest:

**REDACTED s.30(b)(i)**

Pls let me know if this works for you? If so, we can get the revised 'reform' brief by end of play today?

Thx and happy to discuss,

[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

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| Head of FMQ Team, Scottish Government | 0131 244 3558 | [REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

----- Find out more on [Preparing First Minister's Questions \(FMQs\)](#) -----

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**From:**

**Sent:** 15 June 2021 10:56

**To:** First Minister FMQs <[FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot)>;

**Cc:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <[ETFMQPQ@gov.scot](mailto:ETFMQPQ@gov.scot)>; McLean L (Liza) <[Liza.McLean@gov.scot](mailto:Liza.McLean@gov.scot)

[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** RE: OECD report on SQA FMQ - due 2pm

Hi [REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

Thanks for sharing, and also copying in for info. [REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]

To confirm that the SQA Exams FMQ brief currently includes the following lines:

## **SQA/EDUCATION SCOTLAND REFORM**

**The commitment to review the SQA and Education Scotland is a key priority that will be informed by the findings of the OECD review on 21 June.**

- We will be considering options for reform which ensure that schools get the best possible support to enable them to focus relentlessly on providing the highest quality of learning and teaching for our children.
- This will include looking at the role, remit and purpose of the organisations, as well as considering their functions and governance arrangements.
- We will seek the views of all stakeholders in due course.
- As part of a reform agenda we will also devolve even greater powers to schools while intensifying the discussion around school based decision making.

Best regards

**[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

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**From: Sent:** 15 June 2021 10:53

**To:** First Minister FMQs <[FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot)>; McLean L (Liza) <[Liza.McLean@gov.scot](mailto:Liza.McLean@gov.scot)>;

**REDACTED s.38(1)(b)**

**Subject:** RE: OECD report on SQA FMQ - due 2pm

, **[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

Probably worth copying in the main NQ Team –

**[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]** National Coordinator: OECD Review of Curriculum for Excellence, Scottish Government: Learning Directorate, Call: 07824 102793 Email: [anna.stansfield@gov.scot](mailto:anna.stansfield@gov.scot)

**PLEASE NOTE MY WORKING PATTERN IS MONDAY-THURSDAY.**



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**From:** Chrystal C (Cherie) <[Cherie.Chrystal@gov.scot](mailto:Cherie.Chrystal@gov.scot)> **On Behalf Of** First Minister FMQs

**Sent:** 15 June 2021 10:51

**To:** Roy D (David) <[David.Roy@gov.scot](mailto:David.Roy@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <[ETFMQPQ@gov.scot](mailto:ETFMQPQ@gov.scot)>; First Minister FMQs

<[FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot](mailto:FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot)>; **[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]** McLean L (Liza) <[Liza.McLean@gov.scot](mailto:Liza.McLean@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** OECD report on SQA FMQ - due 2pm

**Importance:** High

Good morning **[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

Thanks for providing the attached brief. Could it be updated to reflect the following articles please? Grateful for a revised version of the brief by 2pm if possible please.

**[REDACTED s.25(1)]**

**[REDACTED s.25(1)]**

**[REDACTED s.25(1)]**

Thanks,

**[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

---

**From**

**Sent:** 15 June 2021 10:25

**To:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <[ETFMQPQ@gov.scot](mailto:ETFMQPQ@gov.scot)>

**Cc:** **[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

McLean L (Liza) <[Liza.McLean@gov.scot](mailto:Liza.McLean@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** RE: OECD Report on SQA Brief

Hi **[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

We had suggested leaving this note off the list this week with something much more fulsome to come next week when the report is published. All lines are in the empowerment/autonomy note but for clarity I have attached the OECD note – with a small tracked change. I have copied **[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]** into this email as she is leading on preparing for publication next week.

Thanks

**[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

---

**From:** > **On Behalf Of** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox

**Sent:** 15 June 2021 10:17

**To:** **[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

**Cc:** ET FMQ/PQ Mailbox <[ETFMQPQ@gov.scot](mailto:ETFMQPQ@gov.scot)>

**Subject:** OECD Report on SQA Brief

Hi,

Sorry if we have missed anything, could you please send up the OECD Report on SQA brief please?

Many thanks

**[REDACTED s.38(1)(b)]**

First Minister Questions & Parliamentary Questions  
Room 1N.04 | St Andrew's House | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG



Before you print think about the ENVIRONMENT



You can find more detailed information on answering PQs here [Answering Parliamentary Questions \(PQs\)](#)

You can also [download the PQs desk aid to print out and keep](#). It summarises the process and important timings to remember for delivering PQs each week.

If you or anyone in your team require any training/awareness in PQs please get in touch

**From:** McLean L (Liza)  
**Sent:** 18 June 2021 11:26  
**To:** Director of Learning  
**Cc:** Griffin J (Joe); **[Redacted]**; Anson S (Sam); Drought A (Andrew); **[Redacted]**; Pentland MK (Malcolm)  
**Subject:** RE: Highly confidential: GIQ  
**Sensitivity:** Private

Graeme, with thanks to colleagues please now see below and attached. If you are content, we can send up to Cab Sec and Colin ahead of the meeting at 2pm.

- Draft GIQ
- Draft Independent Advisor Remit
- Updated Briefing (with changes highlighted in track)
- Updated Speaking Note (with changes highlighted in track)
- Updated Response Tracker

Confidential - OECD Review - Parliamentary Statement - 22 June - Speech - AS draft - latest version sent to Cab Sec 17 June

<https://erdm.scotland.gov.uk:8443/documents/A33701274/details>

OECD Review - Ministerial - draft briefing pack for Cabinet Secretary's Statement on OECD Review - latest version sent to Cab Sec 17 June

<https://erdm.scotland.gov.uk:8443/documents/A33556697/details>

OECD Review - SG initial response to recommendations for Cabinet Secretary - 15 June 2021 - latest version sent to Cab Sec 17 June

<https://erdm.scotland.gov.uk:8443/documents/A33701440/details>

Liza McLean  
Interim Deputy Director, Learning Workforce, Infrastructure and Reform  
Learning Directorate  
Working from home – **[Redacted]**

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**From:** Director of Learning <[DirectorofLearning@gov.scot](mailto:DirectorofLearning@gov.scot)>  
**Sent:** 17 June 2021 21:50  
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**Subject:** Highly confidential: GIQ  
**Sensitivity:** Private

Colleagues

Not for onward sharing or discussion outwith this distribution list please.

I spoke to Cab Sec this evening regarding Monday's GIQ. Ms Somerville is keen that we use this to signal the direction of travel regarding the agencies **[Redacted]**. This means that when Cab Sec does media bids on Monday she is able to talk about this aspect of the SG response. More detail will of course be in the statement.

**[Redacted]** – according to the SITREP you are drafting the GIQ. Can we see a draft on Friday morning please. It will need to go to Cab Sec and Colin before the pre-brief at 2pm.

The question needs to be along the lines of asking the SG what the implications of the OECD report, published today, are on the planned reform of the SQA and Education Scotland.

Answer needs to quote from the report re unusual to have inspection in a body like ES therefore we intend to remove inspection function from ES, and as a result of recommendation 9 our intention is to replace the SQA with a new agency covering curriculum and assessment. Lots of opps for engagement and consultation on this. Legislation required. More details in the statement tomorrow, including our overall response to the report and the other recommendations.

**We also need to strengthen the wording in the statement, tracker, briefing and remit for the advisor given this steer from Cab Sec on SQA.**

Liza/ **[Redacted]** – the remit for the advisor needs to focus on the reform of the agencies, **[Redacted]**. We can refer to taking account of the wider context and any potential impacts on regional level, but the next steps on RICs etc will be led by us when we see the RIC review. Grateful if I can see a further draft of the remit on Friday.

Happy to discuss any aspect of this further on Friday morning. Thanks, Graeme.