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Participants' Voices

Qualifications
for the Future

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Structure of the input

- The Scottish system
- Review issues
- SQA activities
 - Reports
 - Engagement activities



The national assessment system

Age	Class	Assessment
17-18	S6	Internal (units), SCQF level 4-7 (Intermediate, Higher, Advanced Higher)
16-17	S5	Internal (units), SCQF level 4-6 (Intermediate, Higher)
15-16	S4	Internal (units), SCQF level 4-5 (Standard Grade, Intermediate)
14-15	S3	Internal
13-14	S2	Internal, Scottish Survey of Achievement
12-13	S1	Internal
11-12	P7	Internal, Scottish Survey of Achievement
10-11	P6	Internal
9-10	P5	Internal, Scottish Survey of Achievement
8-9	P4	Internal
7-8	P3	Internal, Scottish Survey of Achievement
6-7	P2	Internal
5-6	P1	Internal
3-5	Nursery	Internal

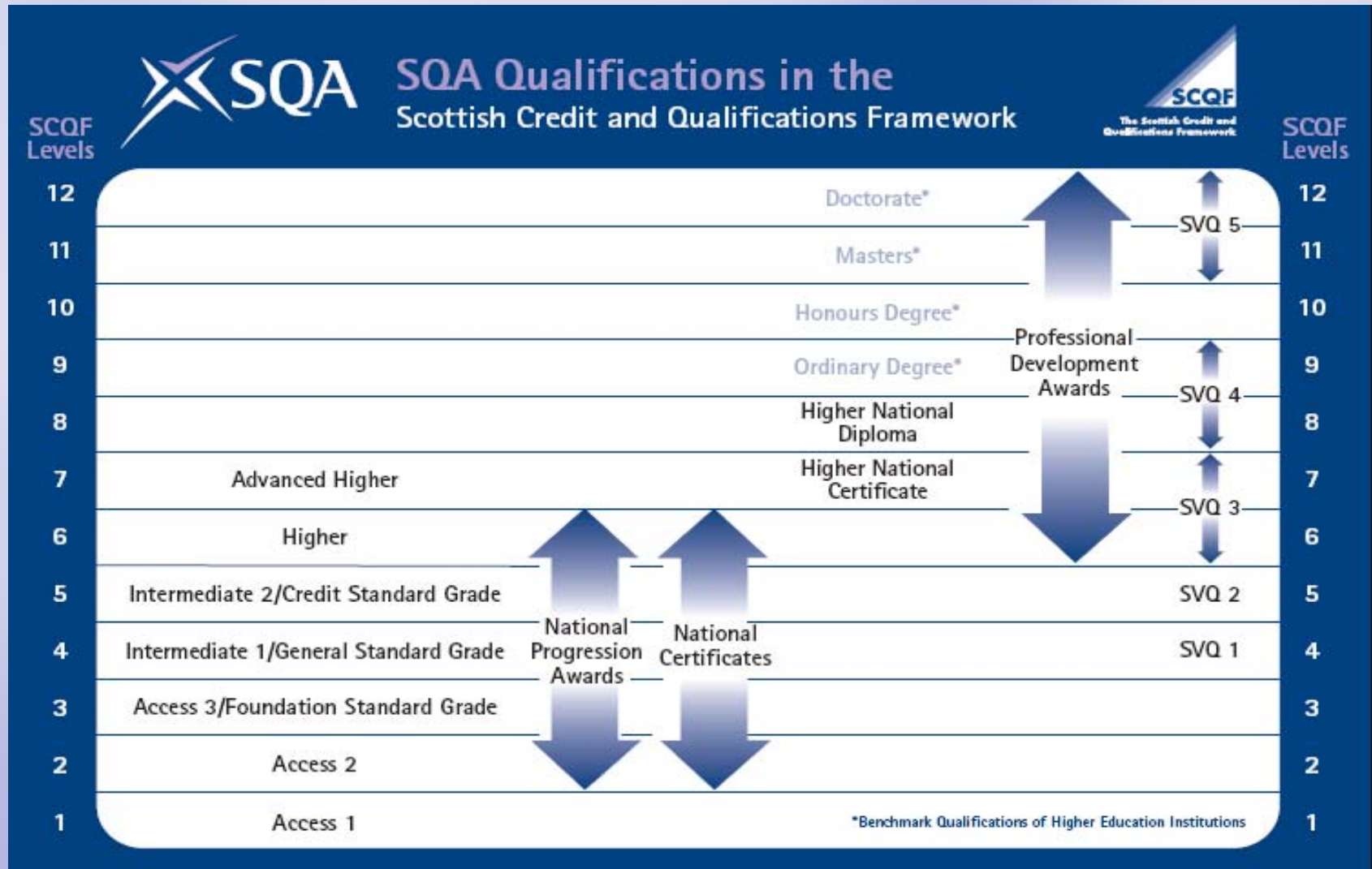


Scottish Survey of Achievement

- ◆ Random sample of schools and pupils from P3, P5, P7, S2
- ◆ 4 year rolling programme:
 - English language with core skills
 - Mathematics with core skills
 - Science with core skills
 - Social Subjects Enquiry Skills with core skills
- ◆ Written and practical
- ◆ Also collecting teachers' judgements on pupils
- ◆ Centrally marked
- ◆ Reporting at National and Authority level only



The Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework



The Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework within schools

<u>SCQF Level</u>	<i>Standard Grade (1980s -)</i>	“Highers” (2000 -)
7		Advanced Higher
6		Higher
5	<i>Credit</i>	Intermediate 2
4	<i>General</i>	Intermediate 1
3	<i>Foundation</i>	Access 3
2		Access 2
1		Access 1



Current Scottish Qualifications at SCQF 4-5

- ◆ Outcome - based
- ◆ elements / units
- ◆ Combination of teacher- and external assessment
- ◆ Variety of quality assurance mechanisms
- ◆ “Prelims”



Consultation 2002

Features of our present curriculum that people valued included:

- ◆ **the flexibility which already exists in the Scottish system – no one argued for a more prescriptive national system**
- ◆ **the combination of breadth and depth offered by the curriculum**
- ◆ **the quality of teaching**
- ◆ **the quality of supporting material that helps teachers to deliver much of the current curriculum**
- ◆ **the comprehensive principle**



Consultation 2002

People argued for changes which would:

- ◆ **reduce over-crowding in the curriculum and make learning more enjoyable**
- ◆ **better connect the various stages of the curriculum from 3 to 18**
- ◆ **achieve a better balance between 'academic' and 'vocational' subjects and include a wider range of experiences**
- ◆ **equip young people with the skills they will need in tomorrow's workforce**
- ◆ **make sure that assessment and certification support learning**
- ◆ **allow more choice to meet the needs of individual young people**



Qualifications for the Future Research - 2006/07: Context

- ◆ Variety of assessment types:
- Externally marked course examinations with grades and internally marked Units with no grades (pass/fail only) with external verification
- Externally marked course examinations with grades, with external verification
- Internally marked courses based on internally marked units with no grades (pass/fail only), with external verification
- Internally marked Units with no grades (pass/fail only), with external verification



Methodology

- ◆ literature reviews
- ◆ engagement with stakeholders



Literature reviews

SQA provided reviews on:

- ◆ Teacher assessment and external assessment
- ◆ Assessment and certification structures in other countries
- ◆ Assessment approaches currently used in SQA qualifications
- ◆ Case Studies: innovative practice in formative assessment



Engagement with stakeholders

Semi-structured interviews + workshops/seminars involving:

- ◆ 2000 participants (managers, teachers and learners)
- ◆ around 300 focus groups
- ◆ sample of 70 schools and 27 further education colleges



Engagement with stakeholders

- ◆ 2 Phases – piloting prior to phase 1 and phase 2 questions arising from and validating phase 1
- ◆ Views from individuals and institutions not attributed
- ◆ Accuracy of data checked with institutions
- ◆ Data analysed using constant comparative method (Silverman, 2000)
- ◆ Evaluation of all engagement activity



Qualifications for the Future Research - 2006/07: Views of Participants

- ◆ Different opinions
- ◆ Assessment workload contested
- ◆ Assessment purpose often confused with assessment type
- ◆ Validity of internal assessment seen as problematic
- ◆ Affective domain as important as cognitive



Qualifications for the Future Research - 2006/07: Views of Participants

- ◆ “The courses are too assessment driven. Big assessment load on students, and teachers always have to teach toward assessment within the restricted time available” (FE manager)
- ◆ “External assessment can increase the pressure for (adult) ‘returners’ – but this has to be weighed against the huge gains in confidence when they succeed” (FE teacher)



Qualifications for the Future Research - 2006/07: Views of Participants

- ◆ “External exams bring a lot of stress which can lead to poor performance on the day of examinations” (school learner)
- ◆ “External exams put a lot of pressure on teachers to get results. This means that learning takes place in a highly pressurised atmosphere” (school learner)
- ◆ “External exams give a national standard and some guarantee of fairness across the country” (school learner)



Qualifications for the Future Research - 2006/07: Views of Participants

- ◆ “Internal assessment gives the opportunity to gain credit for effort on more than one day” (school learner)
- ◆ “If we had more internal assessment we would need more checks and we would need to ensure that cheating was penalised” (school learner)
- ◆ “If we don’t have checks, learners parents and employers won’t have confidence in the system” (school learner)



Participants' Voices: Some Issues

- ◆ How best should we maintain standards in our assessment systems but balance the assessment workload?
- ◆ Is teaching to the test inevitable – how can we reduce its effects?
- ◆ What changes will technologies like Web2 bring to assessment systems?
- ◆ What are the big issues within your own assessment systems – what can we learn from you?





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