

Confidential

Meeting: Qualifications Board
Location: Virtual - Zoom
Date: 16 July 2021, 10:30 – 15:20

PRESENT:

The Chair (Suzy Walton), Keith Brumfitt, Charlotte Gladstone-Millar, Cristina Gutu, Michelle Hourican and Nigel Spencer.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Executive Director – Content, Quality and Innovation (Alan Hatfield), Director – Practice Regulation (Sundeep Takwani), Director – Skills and Assessment (Catherine Edwards), Director – Exam Delivery and Innovation (Judith Bennett, for items 1-6 only), Director - Professional Qualifications (Ann Lamb), Market Director – Partnerships and Recognition (Stephen Shields, for item 4 only), Head of Education Recognition (Katrina Smyth), Head of ACCA Qualifications (Jacky Bateman), Head of Recognition - Markets (Trina Cowie, for item 4 only), Qualifications Data Science Lead (Tom Laycock) – items 1-5 only, Senior Manager – Professional Education (James Patrick for item 8 only), Standards Manager (Laura Murphy) and Regulation Officer (Jo Burns).

OBSERVERS:

Kate Ringham (Oxford Brookes University) – items 1-4 only.
Elaine Darby (Director of Undergraduate Education for the School of Business & Management, Royal Holloway, incoming Chief External Examiner) – items 1-4 only

APOLOGIES:

No apologies were received.

1. MINUTES and ACTION LOG

The Board discussed the post-Board note of Appendix 1 of the Minutes of 9 April 2021, concerning the student feedback received and reiterated that it remains interested in trends from this and other relevant feedback. ACCA agreed to investigate the opportunity to be able to summarise the feedback and provide further insight to the Board.

The Board approved the minutes of the last meeting of the Qualifications Board held on 9 April 2021.

The Board agreed to amend action item no. 5, to show as an ongoing item, rather than as a closed action and approved the Action Log.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. EXAMINATION RESULTS GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Board received a presentation from the Director – Skills and Assessment regarding the delivery of the exams and the results of the June 2021 exam session, including an update on any issues arising since the last examination results governance review.

The Board also received a report from the Chief External Examiner on her review of the exam papers. The Board noted that the Chief External Examiner's review of the exam papers was not impacted by Covid-19 and the Chief External Examiner confirmed the following:

- the Applied Skills exams were set at Level 6 and all exams were comparable in standard and that there were no overlaps.
- the Strategic Professional exams were set at Level 7 and all exams were comparable in standard and that there were no overlaps.
- the breadth and depth of syllabus covered for the individual exams was appropriate with the appropriate emphasis on applied technical knowledge and a good range of business models are utilised, including not-for-profit
- the rigorous analysis of examination results provides integrity to the process
- that there were no aspects of the examinations that gave her cause for concern.

The Chief External Examiner also commended the following:

- the use of relevant work-based scenarios
- the use of videos and webinars provided to support students.

Following all evidence presented and subsequent discussion, the Board agreed to ratify the June 2021 examination results.

The Board and ACCA expressed their sincere gratitude to Charlotte Gladstone-Millar at her last Qualifications Board for her exceptional work as External Examiner for ACCA.

4. ROUTES TO ACCA MEMBERSHIP

The Board noted the paper received prior to the meeting on the routes to ACCA membership and received a presentation from the Director of Professional Qualifications, the Market Director – Partnerships and Recognition and the Head of Recognition - Markets.

5. EXAM DELIVERY AND INNOVATION

The Board noted a presentation on the exam delivery and innovation programme from the Director – Exam Delivery and Innovation.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND BOARD WORK PLAN

The Board noted its work plan for the Council year 2020-2021 and agreed to contact the Regulation Officer with any suggestions for agenda item topics for the next Council year.

The Board noted its Terms of Reference and that the Chair reports to the Regulatory Board after each meeting of the Qualifications Board and more widely on an annual basis.

7. LEAD REGULATOR UPDATE

The Board noted the update on ACCA's interactions with its lead regulators from the Head of Education Recognition and that ACCA remains in good standing with its lead regulators.

8. ACCA WIDE DEVELOPMENTS

The Board noted a presentation on student progression and support from the Senior Manager – Professional Education.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board noted the dates of future meetings:

- Friday 15 October 2021 – Half day (AM)