



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Title of research: Higher National (NextGen: HN) Employer Engagement Research

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Hi, my name is Rachel Whitford and I am a Research Analyst at the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). I am interested in finding out your views on the new HNC and HND qualifications (NextGen: HN) that will replace the current HNC/D in the near future. You are being invited to take part in an interview. This information sheet will tell you everything you need to know about the research and how you can take part. Before you decide if you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information very carefully.

If there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information, you can ask me at any time, and I will be happy to answer any questions via the email address below.

1. What is the purpose of this research?

SQA is currently in the process of adapting our current HNCs and HNDs to give learners the skills they need to thrive in the 21st century workplace. Some new key features of our NextGen: HN qualifications are detailed below:

- Incorporation of meta-skills to enable learners to adapt their learning for the workforce
- HNC and HND will become standalone qualifications in their own right
- Incorporation of digital technology across learning, teaching and assessment
- Opportunity to build knowledge and understanding of Learning for Sustainability
- Larger and fewer units of learning
- New models of grading

Since 2021, the NextGen: HN has been piloted across a selection of colleges in Scotland. Some learners who have taken part in the pilot have already entered the workforce. The purpose of this research is to find out what employers of HND/C graduates think about the issues currently facing their sector, their views on the current HNC/D and the new HNC and HND proposals.

2. Why have I been chosen?

You are being asked to take part because your views will be essential to shaping the future workforce in your sector.

It is important that we listen to the perspectives of key stakeholders in your industry to find out whether the proposed changes to the NextGen: HN are appropriate for your sector and what the impact of these changes may be.

3. Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part in this research. Participation in the research project is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to do so. If you change your mind after the research has started, you do not need to explain why but please let me know as soon as possible so I can remove your data and any personal details.

4. What does taking part involve?

You will be asked to take part in an interview. We will ask you some questions about what you think about what you think about the issues currently facing your sector, your views on the current HNC/D and the new HNC and HND proposals. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to. This will take about 30-60 minutes. Interviews will take place over Microsoft Teams or by phone. We will record and save the answers on Microsoft Cloud/SharePoint so that afterwards we can listen carefully to what was said. You will be asked to complete a Consent Form. After you have signed this form, you are still free to change your mind.

5. Will the information that I give you in this research be kept confidential?

I will keep all the data I collect in a secure online location that only specific colleagues involved in the research project who need it will have access. All personal identifiers will be removed from the data. All research and personal data will be erased on project completion. When I write about what I have found, your name will not be mentioned. Instead of the name, if this is used, I will use a pseudonym or code to ensure anonymity.

You have a right to ask for personal information we hold about you. This is commonly known as a Subject Access Request (SAR). This gives you the right to receive a copy or summary of your information. If you wish to make such a request, please contact data.protection@sqa.org.uk.

If I discover anything which makes me worried during the data collection that you might be in danger of harm to self or others, I might have to inform relevant agencies of this.

6. What will happen to the results of this research?

I will analyse the data I collect from participants and present this in a report that may be published externally. I will destroy the data at the end of the project.

7. What about research ethics?

This project has been developed in accordance with SQA's Code of Research Practice (CoRP) which lays out a framework for conducting ethical, equitable and sustainable research. For more information on the CoRP contact the Research and Evaluation team on researchandevaluation@sqa.org.uk.

8. Who can I contact for further information?

If you have any questions about this research, please contact me at rachel.whitford@sqa.org.uk. If you wish to make a request for the information we hold about you, please contact data.protection@sqa.org.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this form. If you would like to participate, please complete the following webform: <https://forms.office.com/e/BnssTrFFmf>