

08 June 2023

EDUCATION AND SKILLS REFORM – USE OF IN-SERVICE DAYS

As you know, I am committed to taking forward a comprehensive programme of reform in Scottish education that, most importantly, focuses directly on the needs of learners and those that support them, and thereby improving outcomes. Input from those perspectives are therefore crucial and I am writing to ask you to support the prioritisation of time within the first in-service days of the new academic year to focus on our ambitions for education reform and making sure that these deliver for our teachers and practitioners, and ultimately for learners.

To support our ambitious agenda, the Scottish Government has commissioned a series of independent reviews to inform our reform commitments and to ensure that the delivery landscape that underpins our education and skills system is fit for the future, to serve the needs of our learners, our economy and our society.

Building on Professor Muir's report, focused primarily on reform of our national education bodies, we now have the outputs on the National Discussion on Education, and are looking forward to the findings of James Withers' review of the role of public bodies across the skills landscape. Importantly we also expect to be able to publish the final report from Professor Hayward's Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment shortly.

I believe that the coming months provide an important opportunity to engage teachers further in relation to our education reform agenda, including first steps around the outputs from the National Discussion and from Professor Hayward's work, building on the extensive engagement that both involved.

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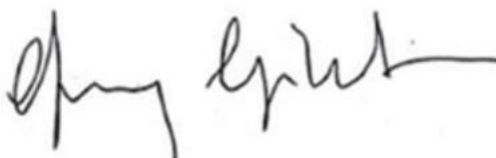
I am therefore asking that you consider how a focus on both can be included in those in-service days. Specifically:

- The outputs of the [National Discussion on Education](#) have given us a clear vision and a set of values and principles, providing an overarching framework to guide our reform agenda in schools. It would be useful for teachers to have the opportunity to consider the report, including the call to action that it contains.
- Professor Hayward published [her interim report](#) in March, providing a high-level overview of a preferred model for future qualifications and assessment. The model, if adopted, would represent very significant change, aiming to ensure that all senior phase learners have an enhanced and equal opportunity to demonstrate the breadth, depth and relevance of their learning. The expectation is that the Government will publish the Review's final report before summer recess with a formal Government response following the return of Parliament. It would be useful for teachers to have the opportunity to consider the final report, when available, including the support that might be required to enable them to play their part in implementing it.

My officials will provide material to support each of these aspects before the end of June. In the meantime, I would be grateful for your support in enabling time to be dedicated for this focus during the in-service days at the start of the autumn term. My officials will engage further on the proposed context and approach, including providing relevant material to support the discussions by the end of June.

I am very clear that education reform is not something that Government, or indeed any single part of the system, can or should do alone. I look forward to continuing to work with you on our shared agenda and in making sure that we are focusing ever more closely on supporting our educators to achieve even better outcomes with learners across Scotland.

Yours sincerely,



JENNY GILRUTH MSP
CABINET SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

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