



Scottish Qualifications Authority
Ùghdarras Theisteanas Na H-Alba

18 April 2023

Sue Webber MSP
Convener of the Education, Children and Young People Committee
By email to: ECYP.committee@Parliament.Scot

Contact: Fiona Robertson
fiona.robertson@sqa.org.uk

Dear Convener

Thank you for your letter of 21 March 2023 regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, including ChatGPT, and their potential impact on education and assessment.

As the Committee will be aware, in recent months there has been an increased focus on the use of AI and, in particular, ChatGPT. This has led to consideration of the opportunities and challenges AI tools present for learning and assessment across the education system and beyond.

SQA has a responsibility to ensure that qualifications are awarded on the basis of evidence of knowledge, skills and understanding. Many of our assessments are conducted under controlled conditions that prevent the use of such online tools. There are also checkpoints built into assessment approaches that help teachers and lecturers identify work that may not be authentic. This includes the use of plagiarism detection software.

It is rare for learners to submit work to SQA that is not their own, or that has not been produced in accordance with the relevant assessment conditions. However, we have malpractice procedures in place which outline that learners who do submit work that is not their own risk penalty, which can include the cancellation of their award. Exam guidance for learners, including information about rules and fairness, is available in SQA's [Your Exams](#) booklet. Copies for learners have been sent to all schools and colleges, and the booklet is also available on our website.

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Schools, colleges, and training providers also have an important role to play in retaining the credibility of learners' qualifications, particularly for assessment components such as coursework. With this in mind, we provided guidance to all centres on 6 February, which highlights that teachers and lecturers can support and encourage learners to have confidence in their own ideas and ability, as well providing practical steps on how to help reduce the potential risk of AI-generated responses.

Principal Assessors who have responsibility for courses with particular coursework components, for example open book elements to the assessment, are being provided with additional guidance around identifying potential AI-produced work. All the normal protocols are in place to escalate potential malpractice concerns for investigation.

AI technologies continue to develop and, with others in the wider education community including the UK's Joint Council for Qualifications, we will be keeping our approach under review, to consider the emerging research and evidence base including the opportunities and challenges AI may present. There will also be a need to monitor further advances in the technology and understanding of the role of AI tools in education to guide future approaches to qualifications and assessment.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Robertson', written in a cursive style.

Fiona Robertson
SQA Chief Executive