



SQA Accreditation Awarding Body Approval Policy

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Policy author	Senior Regulation Manager
Policy owner	Head of Accreditation
Business Area	Accreditation
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Policy approved by	Accreditation Committee
Policy approval date	January 2020
Equality impact assessment (EqIA) approval date	July 2023

Why do we need the policy?

To ensure that SQA Accreditation is consistent in only granting awarding body approval status to organisations which can fully meet the specified regulatory requirements.

Who is it for?

SQA Accreditation will apply this policy to all organisations seeking to gain approved awarding body status.

What support is available?

Regulation and Accreditation Regulatory Requirements

General Approval Requirements

Guidance for Prospective Awarding Bodies

Awarding Body Approval Process

Process for Appeals and Complaints

https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Awarding_Body_Approval

<https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Regulation/Policies>

https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/About_Us/Complaints_Handling_Procedure

https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/Regulation/Regulatory_Requirements

https://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/accreditationfiles/Awarding_Body_Approval/Guidance_for_Prospective_ABs_October_2015.pdf

1 Policy Statement

SQA is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects difference. We believe that, as an employer and public body, we can play a leading part in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion by making them an integral part of our decision making. This policy has an Equality Impact Assessment completed on it at the development stage to assess how this policy may impact on equality groups and the findings from this are reflected in this policy.

This policy has been approved by SQA's Accreditation Committee (AC).

The Accreditation Committee is authorised by the Scottish Government to delegate authority to the Accreditation Coordination Group (ACG).

The ACG is an internal group made up of members of SQA Accreditation and provides regular updates to the AC.

2 Responsibilities

SQA Accreditation will only approve an organisation as an awarding body where it can demonstrate compliance with the Regulatory Requirements.

SQA Accreditation reserves the right to refuse awarding body status to organisations which are unable to evidence compliance and will provide comprehensive reason(s) for its decision.

An awarding body, as recognised by SQA Accreditation, is an organisation which functions with the purpose of awarding qualifications accredited by SQA Accreditation.

The granting of awarding body approval status is subject to an organisation meeting SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Requirements.

3 Process

SQA Accreditation strongly recommends that any organisation considering applying for awarding body approval and qualification accreditation, undertakes a process of self-appraisal to establish if it is currently in a position to make a viable application.

In undertaking a self-appraisal, potential awarding bodies should consider whether or not they are capable of meeting the general approval requirements below. These are considered key to progressing towards application for approval:

- The organisation has a demonstrable track record effectively delivering qualifications
- The organisation is currently based and operates from within the European Union (EU) and/or the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)
- The organisation is able to provide evidence of financial stability
- There are no grounds for believing that the organisation's owners, Directors or Senior Managers are unfit to be in charge of the organisation

Full instructions are provided to assist prospective awarding bodies through the self-appraisal and approval process on the SQA Accreditation website. Please see *'Guidance for Prospective Awarding Bodies'*

Any organisation seeking approved awarding body status must undertake, in full, the steps outlined in *'Becoming an Awarding Body'* detailed on the SQA Accreditation website.

4 Appeals

All awarding bodies will have the right to appeal decisions made by the Accreditation Coordination Group. Grounds for appeal will vary depending on a case by case basis, therefore all appeals made will be considered in their own right.

Full details of the process for Appeals and Complaints can be found on the SQA Accreditation website.

5 Definitions

Awarding Body: An organisation which issues certificates for qualifications to formally recognise the achievements of individuals and which also quality assures the delivery and assessment of those qualifications.