Methodology

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Lead Official is the Information and Research Manager (IRM)

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[SQA Accreditation - Our Structure and Staff](#)

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An Assurance of Quality

Methodology

The below is in reference to the methodologies of SQA Accreditation only. For information about SQA Awarding Body, please refer to their website. SQA Accreditation are distinct and autonomous from SQA Awarding Body; SQA Awarding Body are one of the Awarding Bodies (AB's) regulated by SQA Accreditation and are therefore subject to the same processes and regulation as any other AB.

SQA Accreditation receives registration and certification data from AB's. These AB's often deal with multiple training providers who deliver the vocational qualifications. This means that the data received by SQA Accreditation is from third party organisations. The data is submitted to the Information Assistant who quality checks the data and collates it for quarterly and annual reports. There is a direct line of communication between the IA and the AB's. This is key to maintaining high quality data. The direct line of communication allows any problems with the data to be communicated effectively and any necessary adjustments to be made quickly. Further information on the process can be found in Appendix I.

There is a weekly meeting called the Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG) where decisions are made with regards to the approval of AB's and qualifications are accredited, if appropriate. During this process, AB's submit an AC1 form for AB approval or an AC2 form which is for the accreditation, re-accreditation, extension, amendment, or withdrawal of a qualification. AC2 forms can only be accepted by ACG if the organisation has previously submitted an approved AC1 form, thus only approved AB's can create or amend qualifications. More information about the processes can be found here, the process map is at the bottom of the page. The ACG also approve Qualification Products and Workplace Core Skill units using the QP/CRA1 form. Further information can be found on our ACG page and a list of the decisions can be found on the published ACG decision list. If approved by ACG, the information in the forms is added onto SQA Accreditation databases. Depending on the form, it will include information, such as AB qualifications, Accreditation Manager and whether it is in a Modern Apprenticeship framework. This information will be added to internal databases and, along with information from the quarterly data returns, will be the basis for statistics publications found on the SQA Accreditation website.

The data held by SQA Accreditation is unique as it gives a broad look into the supply and demand of vocational qualifications and so can be useful for research purposes. Requests for co-operation or data can be made to info.accreditation@sqa.org.uk or the Information and Research Manager (IRM).

Appendix I

- The IA contacts all AB's regulated by SQA Accreditation to request registration and certification data, providing a deadline of 10 working days after the end of the quarter.
- The AB's send in the data using the data returns template so it is standardised.

Registrations	Certifications	Qualification Title	Code	Level	Qualification Type
Please enter the number of registrations against each accredited qualification	*Please enter the number of certifications against each accredited qualification*	*Please enter the SQA accredited qualification title as it will appear on the candidates certificate*	*Please enter the four digit accreditation code*	*Please enter the two digit level code*	*Please enter the qualification type, this will either be 'SVQ', 'non SVQ' or 'Workplace Core Skills'*
number only	number only	Include SCQF level if applicable			Any of the above but not 'SCQF'

- The codes, name, and Qualification Type of each qualification are checked against a database which has the correct information about the qualifications starting from when it is accredited by ACG.
- When checking the uptake figures, we consider the dates of the quarter submitted, i.e. the Accreditation End date or Certification End date may have passed but the qualification was still 'live' in the previous quarter.
- AB's are also asked to highlight any late certifications (certifications after the Certification End date) and provide date of approval from Regulation Team.
- Any issues with data are recorded for future quality checks.
- The IA communicates directly with the AB if any issues arise, so the data can be corrected by the AB at this time, prior to analysis.
- The data is collated in Excel and input into Power Bi, at which point automated quality checks are carried out.
- The IRM carries out data analysis, including comparing the current collated data submission to the previous 3 years submissions.
- The data is analysed in relation to: qualification type, awarding body, developer, qualification category and workplace core skills.
- The report is published approximately four weeks after the data submission is provided to the IA, the publication dates can be found in the publication schedule.
- Should any corrections or revisions be required, our Revisions and Corrections policy will be followed.