

SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

ACCREDITATION COORDINATION GROUP

STANDING ORDERS

Accreditation Coordination Group (ACG) is established to support the Accreditation Committee.

1 Membership and Appointments

- 1.1 The Chair shall be the Head of Accreditation.
- 1.2 Where the Chair is unavailable either the Senior Regulation Manager or Senior Accreditation Manager shall deputise.
- 1.3 The membership of ACG shall be drawn from SQA Accreditation.
- 1.4 The composition of ACG shall be:
 - ◆ The Head of Accreditation
 - ◆ The Senior Regulation Manager
 - ◆ The Senior Accreditation Manager
 - ◆ A Regulation Manager/Regulation Officer
 - ◆ An Accreditation Manager
 - ◆ The Information and Research Manager
 - ◆ The Accreditation Officer
- 1.5 An Administrator will provide the secretariat function for ACG.
- 1.6 The Regulation Manager/Regulation Officer and Accreditation Manager will be drawn from the pool of Managers on a rotational basis.
- 1.7 From time to time, the Chair may invite other individuals who are not Members of ACG to attend a meeting.

2 Frequency of Meetings

- 2.1.1 ACG shall meet on a weekly basis, normally on a Wednesday. A summary report of the accreditation decisions made by ACG will be recorded and reported to Accreditation Committee Members at the quarterly Accreditation Committee meetings. A log of conditions attached at accreditation will be included in the report.

3 Notice of Meetings

- 3.1 Any cancellation or adjournment of a meeting shall only be permissible following agreement of the Chair.

4 Quorum

- 4.1 The quorum necessary for ACG to transact business will be three Members of staff (as described at 1.4 but excluding the Regulation Manager/Regulation Officer and Accreditation Manager) and must include at least one of the following: the Head of Accreditation, the Senior Regulation Manager or the Senior Accreditation Manager.

4.2 If a quorum is not present, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to another time or agree to proceed if agenda items are not deemed contentious and seek confirmation of the decision from Members following the meeting.

4.3 Questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes and, in the case of an equality of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

5 **Order of Business**

5.1 The business of ACG will take place in the following order:

- ◆ Declaration of interest
- ◆ Apologies
- ◆ Minutes of the previous meeting
- ◆ Matters arising
- ◆ Submissions
- ◆ Audit Reports
- ◆ Provider Monitoring Reports
- ◆ Any other business

6 **Conduct of Business**

6.1 Should any Member(s) have any interest in any matter of the proceedings, such interest shall be declared, where possible, at the start of the meeting. The secretariat shall record any such declaration in the minutes of the meeting.

7 **Agenda and Papers**

7.1 The agenda and papers will normally be circulated on the Friday before the scheduled date of the meeting.

8 **Minutes**

8.1 Decisions of ACG shall be recorded by the secretariat.

8.2 Draft minutes will be prepared and considered at the next weekly ACG meeting.

8.3 Following approval of the minutes by ACG, no amendment of decisions made to the minutes shall be permissible without the prior approval of the Head of Accreditation.

9 **Duties of the Accreditation Coordination Group**

9.1 The Accreditation Committee is authorised by the Scottish Government to delegate authority to ACG to:

- ◆ approve awarding bodies to award accredited qualifications
- ◆ approve the credit rating and levelling of Units and qualifications for the SCQF
- ◆ approve Qualification Products submitted by standard setting organisations

- ◆ accredit qualifications, which meet SQA Accreditation's requirements, as published, and to determine the period of accreditation and, where appropriate, specify conditions
- ◆ extend the period of accreditation, re-accredit, or remove accreditation of existing qualifications taking into account the record of awarding bodies in implementing the qualifications, particularly in their compliance with any specific conditions set by SQA Accreditation
- ◆ remove the accreditation of any qualifications that have no update where there is no clear, justifiable evidence from the awarding body of candidate demand for the qualification for a period of two consecutive years
- ◆ remove the approved awarding body status if they fail to meet any of the conditions set out in the 'SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Sanctions Policy'
- ◆ monitor arrangements for promoting qualifications nationally and the provision of information and guidance to standard setting organisations and awarding bodies, making recommendations as appropriate
- ◆ undertake any additional functions relating to accreditation in the light of national developments

10 Process for Appeals

10.1 All awarding bodies and standard setting organisations (hereafter known as 'the appellant') have the right to appeal any decision made by ACG/AC. Please note this is not an exhaustive list of organisations which may appeal to SQA Accreditation. Grounds for appeal vary depending on the individual decision(s) made, therefore, all appeals are considered in their own right. The following are some examples of what may constitute grounds for an appeal:

- ◆ The appellant has evidence to support that a sanction should not have been applied.
- ◆ The appellant has evidence to support that an inappropriate sanction has been applied.
- ◆ The appellant has evidence to support that specific information which may have an impact on the level or allocation of a sanction being applied, has not been considered by ACG.

10.2 Please note that the above is not an exhaustive list of potential grounds for appeal.

All appeals must be made in writing to the Head of Accreditation, SQA Accreditation, The Optima Building, 58 Robertson Street, Glasgow G2 8DQ. All appeals must be received by SQA Accreditation within 20 working days of the date of the ACG meeting at which the decision was made.

- 10.3 On receipt of the appeal, the following process will be implemented:
- ◆ Where possible, every attempt will be made by ACG to resolve the appellant's concerns. ACG will acknowledge the appeal within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal and provide a written response to the appellant within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 10.4 The appellant will be provided with an opportunity to respond to ACG's comments. Should the actions proposed by ACG not be acceptable to the appellant, then written correspondence to this effect must be received from the appellant within 15 working days of the date of ACG decision. This will be considered as the 'final appeal'.
- 10.5 On receipt of any further correspondence, an Extraordinary Meeting of the Accreditation Committee will be convened to independently review the final appeal. The appellant and ACG Members will be informed of the date of this meeting. This Committee will be independent of ACG. No ACG Members will be involved in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Accreditation Committee unless in an independent advisory capacity.
- 10.6 The Accreditation Committee will review all evidence in relation to the appeal from both ACG and the appellant's perspective. AC will issue their decision in writing to both parties on the date of the Extraordinary Meeting.
- 10.7 The decision of Accreditation Committee is final.

11 Complaints

- 11.1 Any complaints about SQA Accreditation should be submitted in line with the Complaints Handling Procedure and/or the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman as necessary.

12 Approval and Amendment to the Standing Order

- 12.1 Only the SQA Board of Management has the power to amend or alter any part of these Standing Orders.
- 12.2 The SQA Board of Management shall review these Standing Orders on a regular basis.