

SQA Accreditation

Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy

Policy	<p>In line with Scottish Government's Business Regulation¹ agenda we take a risk-based approach to quality assurance.</p> <p>Our Quality Enhancement Rating (QER) process informs our risk assessment of each awarding body and is used to consider the level and frequency of audit activity.</p> <p>The frequency of audit activity will depend on the time elapsed since the most recent audit and the Quality Enhancement Rating (QER) attached to the awarding body.</p> <p>As part of our Quality Assurance process, SQA Accreditation will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carry out audits of approved awarding bodies a least once in a three year period and where the risk determines the activity• Conduct monitoring of awarding body providers on an annual basis (where appropriate) <p>Both activities will measure an awarding body's compliance with SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles, Directives, the requirements of the clauses within and any conditions applied to the Accreditation Licence.</p> <p>The audit and provider monitoring reports will be published on SQA Accreditation's website following approval by the Accreditation Committee.</p> <p>SQA Accreditation will not publish the QER applied to the approved awarding body.</p>
Why do we need this policy?	<p>This policy details SQA Accreditation's quality assurance activities and the frequency of audit and provider quality assurance activity. It also highlights the non-exhaustive factors which can contribute towards the awarding body QER and the reports that are made public by SQA Accreditation on its website.</p>
How does the policy apply and to whom/what does it apply?	<p>SQA Accreditation will apply this policy to all organisations with approved awarding body status.</p> <p>Please note that 'provider' covers providers, centres and/or assessment locations, exam venues and any satellite sites.</p>

¹ known as the 5 Principles of Better Regulation in the rest of the UK

Guidelines on Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy

1 Status

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 Process

In line with Scottish Government's Business Regulation agenda we take a risk-based approach to quality assurance. Our Quality Enhancement Rating (QER) process informs our risk assessment of each awarding body and is used to consider the level and frequency of audit activity.

Our quality assurance focus is to ensure awarding bodies can demonstrate compliance with the:

- Accreditation Licence and/or any attached conditions
- Regulatory Principles and Directives

As a regulator SQA Accreditation will ensure that awarding bodies achieve compliance by continually monitoring performance using robust quality assurance processes including:

- conduct awarding body audits
- carry out provider quality assurance activity
- carryout risk profiling of awarding bodies using the Quality Enhancement Rating
- review awarding body self-assessment reports/action plans
- review and evaluate accreditation submissions
- investigate cases of malpractice and maladministration
- review complaints and appeals

We use our [Quality Enhancement Rating](#) to assess and evaluate the level of risk and ensure a fair, consistent and proportionate approach to regulation.

All processes underpinning the Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy including all Regulatory requirements can be found on the [SQA Accreditation website](#).

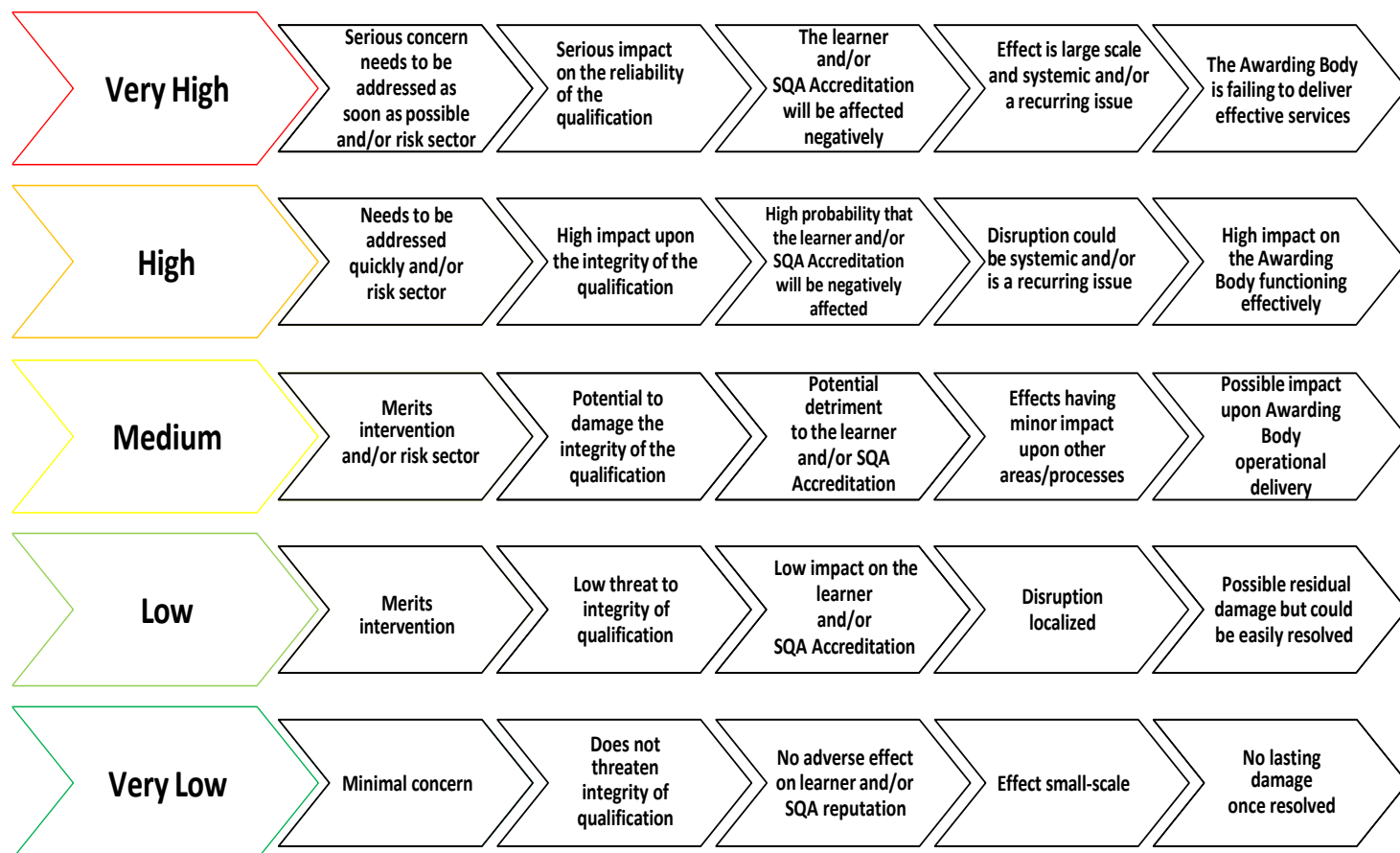
3 Details

The QER may be calculated using the following factors:

- the number of 'Issues' raised at audit and the associated risk rating(s)
- the number of 'Issues' raised during the provider quality assurance activity and the associated risk rating(s)
- persistent failure to either meet deadlines or implement actions to close out issues raised in action plans
- self-assessment
- data submissions
- compliance investigations
- extraordinary circumstances which may be raised outside of visit activities
- complaints and/or validated information

Each risk identified is also rated using our [risk level descriptors](#):

Risk Level Descriptors



Further detail on the [Quality Enhancement Rating](#) can be found on the SQA Accreditation website.

Approved awarding bodies can obtain their QER at any time by requesting this from SQA Accreditation.

4 Appeals

All awarding bodies will have the right to appeal **any** decision made by the ACG.

Grounds for appeal will vary depending on individual situations, 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.

Policy Owner	Head of Accreditation
Policy Author	Senior Regulation Manager
Category (if known)	Accreditation
Document Version No. eg 1.1	8
Revisions Approved by	Accreditation Committee
Date Revisions Approved	April 2022
Review Date	March 2025
Equality Impact Assessment approved	July 2023
Is/should this be on SQA's website	Yes – SQA Accreditation webpage
Details of changes	Web links updated to the 2021 Regulatory Principles