Guidance for Completion of Form AC2
Qualification Accreditation

This guidance will assist approved awarding bodies in the completion of Form AC2 Qualification Accreditation.

NB. If you are not an SQA approved awarding body, then *Form AC1 Awarding Body Approval Application* must be submitted alongside *Form AC2*. Please contact the Accreditation Unit before completing the forms.

For ease of use one electronic form (Form AC2) has been created. This form covers all types of accreditation submissions as follows:

- Accreditation
- Re-accreditation
- Amendment
- Extension
- Withdrawal

The form is split into the following tabs and you need only complete the relevant tabs:

TABS	SUBMISSION TYPE
Tab 1 Contact Details and Qualification Information	To be completed for all submissions
Tab 2 Partnerships	Only to be completed if the qualification is being awarded in partnership with another organisation
Tab 3 Qualification Accreditation/ Re-Accreditation	To be completed for accreditation and re-accreditation submissions along with Tabs 1 and 7
Tab 4 Workplace Core Skills Accreditation/ Re-accreditation/ Amendment/ Extension/Withdrawal	To be completed for all Workplace Core Skills submissions along with Tab 1.
Tab 5 Qualification Amendment and/or Extension	To be completed for amendment and/or extension submissions along with Tab 1 and Tab 7 (for amendments only).
Tab 6 Qualification Withdrawal	To be completed for withdrawal submissions along with Tab 1.
Tab 7 Qualification Structure and SCQF Credit Rating	To be completed for accreditation, re-accreditation and amendment submissions.

The process of accreditation is covered in the flowchart which appends this guidance (Appendix 1). The process of accreditation is underpinned by SQA Accreditation's *Regulatory Principles and Regulatory Principles Directives and these can be obtained by clicking on the link below:*
www.sqa.org.uk/accreditation

Guidance for completion of Form AC2 Qualification Accreditation
The following guidance is designed to support awarding body representatives in completing Form AC2 and in collating the information and supporting documentation required to support the submission.

Points to note in relation to format of form used

Please note that as this form is in Excel 2010 format, when pressing the 'Enter' button on the keyboard this will take you to the next question. In order to return a new line within a cell, select 'Alt' and 'Enter' at the same time.

As Excel cells are limited to showing 1,024 characters, some sections have an additional answer box which states '<Please use this box if you require further space>'. This box should be used when Awarding Body representatives can no longer enter text into the first box. In exceptional circumstances, if your text is greater than both of these boxes, additional text should be sent as an appendix and referenced to the section it supports.

Tab 7 has not been protected so that Awarding Body representatives can add/ remove rows where necessary for the qualification structure. If the submission request is for more than one qualification, this grid can be copied and pasted into the next tab in order to record all structures within the request.

As approved awarding bodies bank documents on Quickr, reference should be made to these documents where appropriate. Both the banked documents and any additional supporting evidence should be clearly referenced in the '**document checklist box'**, indicating if they are banked or attached.

Multiple qualifications may be submitted on the same form provided they are the same type of submission (eg. all accreditation) and cover the same subject area/sector.

The form and supporting documentation will be scrutinised by the assigned Accreditation Manager (AM). The AM will liaise with you on points of clarification prior to presenting the submission to Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG) for approval. However, only the form will be presented to ACG so please ensure that all relevant sections of the form are fully completed.

For further support and guidance please contact SQA Accreditation on:

Tel: 0345 213 5249

e-mail: accreditation@sqa.org.uk

TAB 1 - CONTACT DETAILS AND QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

Tab 1 should be completed for all types of submissions. Depending on what type of qualification and what kind of submission is selected from the drop down menus, an instruction will appear in the box *'Next Stage'* and will indicate the next ***Tab*** to be completed.

1.1   CONTACT DETAILS
This section captures the details of the awarding body and also the person representing the awarding body. The awarding body's representative will be the person to whom all queries relating to this submission will be directed.

If the awarding body is in partnership with another organisation, please click "***yes***" and you will be directed to the ***Tab 2 - Partnership***. Both the awarding body and partner organisation should be recorded on ***Tab 1*** under *'Awarding Body Name(s)'*. ***Tab 2*** should also be completed.

1.2   QUALIFICATION INFORMATION
Please indicate the type of qualification being submitted for accreditation. A drop down box will show the qualification types available.

Qualification type
- *SVQ (this may include stand-alone SVQ Units)*
- *Regulatory Qualifications*
- *Other Qualifications (this may include stand-alone units).*
- *Workplace Core Skills*

Developed by
Please provide the name of the organisation that developed the qualification. This will be the name of the Sector Skills Council/Standard Setting Body (SSC/B), in the case of SVQs. It may also be an awarding body, consortium of awarding bodies or regulatory body in the case of 'Other' or 'Regulatory' qualifications.

1.3   QUALIFICATION TITLE(S)
Please insert the full title of the qualification as it will appear **on the learner/candidate's certificate.**

Where qualification structures have been prior approved by ACG please ensure that the titles match the approved version.

*With respect to qualifications that have been credit rated for the SCQF, the title should include the SCQF Level. Please refer to **Regulatory Principle Directive 4: Titling Conventions for the SCQF Credit Rating of Qualifications** for additional guidance on titling conventions.*

1.4   ACCREDITATION SUBMISSION TYPE

Please click on the box and a drop down menu will appear for you to select the appropriate submission type. These are:

- *Accreditation for all qualifications, with the exception of Workplace Core Skills (this will take you to **Tab 3**)*
- *Re-accreditation for all qualifications, with the exception of Workplace Core Skills (this will take you to **Tab 3**)*
- *Workplace Core Skills accreditation/re-accreditation/amendment/extension/withdrawal (this will take you to **Tab 4**)*
- *Amendment and/or Extension (this will take you to **Tab 5**)*
- *Withdrawal. (this will take you to **Tab 6**)*

TAB 2 - PARTNERSHIPS

If the qualification is being awarded in partnership with another organisation then details of the partnership organisation should be provided in this section. *SQA Accreditation's definition of a 'partnership' is noted below.*

If there is an agreement document between the partners, please check the box. If this submission involves a new partnership arrangement or an amendment (eg. an amendment to responsibilities) to an existing partnership, please provide a copy of the agreement.

When completed, please click the button to return to ***Tab 1***.

A 'partnership' is where two or more organisations work together to fulfil SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements. In doing so, those bodies involved in the partnership carry out awarding body functions and must have significant, clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

TAB 3 - ACCREDITATION/RE-ACCREDITATION

Information required under some sections on **_Tab 3_** may change depending on the submission type selected on **_Tab 1_**, in these instances the guidance may be split into two separate sections.

3.1   QUALIFICATION SUMMARY (FOR SVQ/SVQ UNITS)

When this qualification type **(SVQ/SVQ Unit)** is selected the following sections will appear and should be completed**:**

Date NOS approved
Please provide the date (month/year) the suite of NOS were approved. The final versions of the NOS will be available from the SSC/SSB or the NOS Database – www.nos.ukces.org.uk

Date structure(s) approved
Please provide the date when the qualification structure was approved by ACG. The approved version should contain a footer that states "ACG approved date/month/year, version number". The approved version will be available from the SSC/SSB.

Additional Requirements
Please provide details of any additional requirements which are specific to the qualification being submitted, if applicable.

Date Assessment Strategy approved
Please provide the date the Assessment Strategy was approved by ACG. The approved version should contain a footer that states "ACG approved date/month/year, version number". The approved version will be available from the SSC/SSB.

Date SCQF Credit Rating approved
Please provide the date when the qualification credit rating was approved by ACG. The approved version should contain a footer that states "ACG approved date/month/year, version number". The approved version will be available from the SSC/SSB. Please ensure that the level and credit allocation match the approved credit rating.

SCQF credit rating information should also be included on **_Tab 7 – Qualification Structure and SCQF Credit Rating (Accreditation)_**.

Date Core Skills Signposting approved
Please provide the date when the Core Skills Signposting was approved by ACG. The approved version should contain a footer that states "ACG approved date/month/year, version number". The approved version will be available from the SSC/SSB.

Qualification Structure
Please complete **_Tab 7 – Qualification Structure and SCQF Credit Rating (Accreditation)_**. This tab opens the qualification template and this will enable you to provide details of the units and/or pathway being submitted for accreditation. Please ensure that the qualification and unit titles match those approved by ACG. SCQF credit rating information should also be provided.

3.1	QUALIFICATION SUMMARY (FOR REGULATORY OR OTHER QUALIFICATIONS)

When either of these qualification types **(Regulatory or Other)** is selected the following sections will appear and should be completed**. (In some cases qualification products may have been prior approved by ACG, if so it is important to provide the ACG approved versions).**

Unit Specifications
Please ensure all units being submitted for accreditation are listed on *(Tab 7)*. A copy of all unit specifications must be provided with the submission.

Additional requirements
This may include any additional requirements which have been defined for the qualification - eg. a set of assessment principles which you or the regulatory body may have developed to support the delivery, assessment or quality assurance of this qualification. Please provide information and copies of any supporting documentation.

Credit Rating Body
If the qualification has been SCQF credit rated please provide the name of the Credit Rating Body.

Date SCQF Credit Rating approved
Please provide the date when the credit rating was approved. Please also provide details of the SCQF credit and level for the units and the overall SCQF credit and level if applicable.

SCQF credit rating information should also be included on *Tab 7 – Qualification Structure and SCQF Credit Rating (Accreditation)*.

Please note that if you are submitting qualifications for credit rating approval then the credit rating body will be SQA. Credit rating approval submissions may accompany the accreditation submissions although these will be processed separately. Please refer to the SCQF Credit Rating Approval Process for further information.

Intention to credit rate
If the qualification has not been SCQF credit rated, do you intend to credit rate? If so please provide anticipated timescales and discuss this with your Accreditation Manager.

Qualification Structure
Please complete *Tab 7 – Qualification Structure and SCQF Credit Rating (Accreditation)*. This tab opens the qualification template and this will enable you to provide details of the number of units required to achieve the qualification and the qualification structure (eg. mandatory and optional units). Where qualification structures have been previously approved by ACG please ensure that the structures match the approved versions.

If units/qualifications have been SCQF credit rated and levelled, please also provide this information.

3.2	ACCREDITATION PERIOD – (TO BE COMPLETED FOR ALL QUALIFICATIONS)

You may select an accreditation period of up to 5 years. In addition, you should also select a certification end date (the date from the accreditation end date to the certification end date is also known as the lapsing period) for the qualification taking into account how long it will take an average learner/candidate to complete the qualification and be certificated. You should include a rationale for the dates requested.

The accreditation start date will be the date of the ACG meeting. This information will be provided by SQA Accreditation.

Please note that the dates may be selected by ACG to align with other qualifications eg. where the same qualification is offered by a number of awarding bodies.

If the qualification was developed by an SSC/B then they may be able to provide an indication of a possible accreditation period which aligns to their plans for qualification review.

NB. If this is a re-accreditation submission and you wish a period of dual running of both the old and new qualification then please provide details here **(a maximum period of 3 months will be allowed).**

ACG will confirm the accreditation dates of the qualification.

3.3	**RE-ACCREDITATION – (TO BE COMPLETED FOR ALL QUALIFICATIONS BEING SUBMITTED FOR RE-ACCREDITATION)**

A re-accreditation submission will be required where an awarding body wishes to submit a proposal for a new qualification which will directly replace an existing qualification(s) which is currently accredited.

Please list the qualification titles, qualification codes and the accreditation period of the qualifications being replaced and indicate the qualifications they are being replaced by.

NB: No withdrawal paperwork will be required for the qualification being replaced, however if you would like to request dual running of the old and the new qualifications then this should be clearly stated in the '***accreditation period***' box.

SECTIONS 3.4 TO 3.8 **(TO BE COMPLETED FOR ALL QUALIFICATIONS BEING SUBMITTED FOR ACCREDITATION AND RE-ACCREDITATION)**

3.4 to 3.8 should be completed for all qualifications being submitted for accreditation/re-accreditation, however in some instances, the information required may differ depending on the type of qualification being submitted. In these instances the guidance has been split into two – relating to SVQs/SVQ Units and Regulatory/Other qualifications.

Please refer to Regulatory Principles 9 and 10 (and the associated Supplementary Information) and provide sufficient information to address these Principles attaching any supporting evidence relating to the qualification being submitted for accreditation. Please also clearly reference any documents which are banked with us on Quickr indicating how they support the functions described in sections 3.4 to 3.8.

- *Regulatory Principle 9. The awarding body shall ensure that it has robust systems and processes for the identification, design, development, implementation and review of qualifications, which meet the needs of users.*
- *Regulatory Principle 10. The awarding body shall ensure that it has the necessary arrangements and resources for the effective delivery, assessment and quality assurance of SQA accredited qualifications*

NB. Please remember to include an explanation of the processes and how they relate to the qualification being submitted for accreditation. In addition reference should also be made to any relevant banked documents and any qualification specific supporting documentation attached.

3.4	IDENTIFYING THE NEED/DEMAND FOR A QUALIFICATION (ALL QUALIFICATIONS)

Please provide details of the process for identifying the need/demand for qualifications. If this process has already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the relevant documents.

Please provide details and clear evidence of demand in Scotland for each proposed qualification within this submission.

This may be evidenced by providing:
- a copy of your business case
- a summary of your Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) or your market research and how you have established a market for the qualification. (This may include potential uptake for the qualification)
- industry/employer/provider demand

Some of the evidence may have been generated by the SSC/B which you may have used to inform your decision to seek accreditation.

For re-accreditation submission please also provide a rationale for the re-accreditation and evidence of continuing demand.

3.5	DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING THE QUALIFICATION (SVQ/SVQ UNITS)

Please provide details of the design and development process followed for this qualification. If this process has already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the relevant documents.

This qualification will have been developed by the SSC/B so please provide details of your involvement in the development process. You should also notify the relevant SSC/B of your intention to seek accreditation for the qualification and provide evidence of their support.

Please demonstrate how you ensured that the qualification was fit for purpose for your intended market and ready for delivery/implementation. For example, developing evidence requirements which meet the requirements of the Assessment Strategy and producing guidance for providers on delivery and assessment of the qualification.

3.5	DESIGNING AND DEVELOPING THE QUALIFICATION (REGULATORY AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS)

Please provide details of the design and development process followed for this qualification. If this process has already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the relevant documents.

If the qualification was developed by another awarding body/regulatory body or for another framework please demonstrate how you ensured that it was fit for purpose for your intended market and ready for implementation.

This may be evidenced by:
- detailing your involvement in the development process
- providing details of your internal qualification approval process
- credit rating the qualification against the SCQF
- providing support from the organisation that developed the qualification
- designing a set of assessment principles/requirements to support the qualification delivery and assessment or demonstrating how you will meet any additional requirements set by another body.
- producing assessment materials

3.6 MAINTAINING AND REVIEWING THE QUALIFICATION (FOR ALL QUALIFICATIONS)

Please provide details of review process followed for this qualification. If this process has already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the relevant documents.

This may be evidenced by:
- providing timescales for the review of the qualification (this could include periodic review of take-up)
- detailing your process for collecting feedback on the qualification content and delivery and how you action any issues raised. (**For SVQs** this should include feedback to the SSC/B)

3.7 DELIVERING AND ASSESSING THE QUALIFICATION (SVQ/SVQ UNITS)

Please provide details of the processes followed that ensure the effective delivery and assessment of this qualification. If these processes have already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the relevant documents.

Please provide details of the assessment methods to be used and demonstrate how you ensure these assessment methods are fit for purpose for the qualification being assessed. In addition, please provide evidence of how the assessment methods meet the requirements of the assessment strategy.

This should include:
- assessment requirements/conditions of assessment which are stated in the assessment strategy eg. direct observation of performance in the workplace by the assessor.
- evidence requirements (this should include the type, amount and standard of evidence to be produced).
- any simulation requirements
- how you ensure that the Assessors are appropriately qualified/competent and meet the requirements as stated in the assessment strategy

Please also provide details of any additional arrangements and resources required for the delivery and assessment of the qualification.

3.7 DELIVERING AND ASSESSING THE QUALIFICATION (REGULATORY/OTHER QUALIFICATIONS)

Please provide details of the processes followed that ensures the effective delivery and assessment of this qualification. If these processes have already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the relevant documents.

Please provide details of the assessment methods to be used and demonstrate how you ensure these assessment methods are fit for purpose for the qualification being assessed.

This may include:
- assessment requirements which are specified by a regulatory body or designed by you to support the qualification (eg. this may include how you will meet any requirements as detailed in the assessment principles).
- evidence requirements or assessment criteria (this may include the type, amount and standard of evidence to be produced).
- qualifications and experience of those involved in the delivery and assessment of the qualification and how you will ensure that these requirements are met.
- the conditions of assessment (eg. assessment under invigilated conditions)
- any other specific arrangements or requirements – this may include timescales for delivery, qualifications and experience of those delivering the qualifications or production of question papers etc.

3.8   QUALITY ASSURING THE QUALIFICATION (SVQ/SVQ UNITS)

Please provide details of the quality assurance process followed for this qualification. If this process has already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the documents.

Please also explain how you ensure the quality assurance system is appropriate/fit for purpose for the qualification and ensures the consistency of assessment across providers and over time.

Please detail how your quality assurance systems meet the requirements of the Assessment Strategy and provide details on the following:
- how you ensure that Internal Quality Assurers and External Quality Assurers meet the requirements of the Assessment Strategy
- how you will meet the external quality control element of the Assessment Strategy
- any additional/specific requirements of the Assessment Strategy and how you will meet these requirements
- the format and frequency of External Quality Assurance visits.

3.8   QUALITY ASSURING THE QUALIFICATION (REGULATORY AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS)

Please provide details of the quality assurance process followed for this qualification. If this process has already been documented and a copy banked with us, please make reference to the documents. If a new or revised process has been followed, please provide us with details and copies of the documents.

Please also explain how you ensure the quality assurance system is appropriate/fit for purpose for the qualification and ensures the consistency of assessment across providers and over time.

This should include details of:
- the personnel involved in the quality assurance of the qualification
- how you ensure that the quality assurance personnel are appropriately qualified/experienced to undertake the function
- the format and frequency of the quality assurance activity
- any additional/specific requirements or resources required and how you will meet them
- the standardisation and moderation of quality assurance activity

**TAB 4 - WORKPLACE CORE SKILLS UNITS
ACCREDITATION/ RE-ACCREDITATION/ AMENDMENT/EXTENSION/WITHDRAWAL**

4.1   SUBMISSION TYPE

Please go back to Tab 1, Section 1.4 and select the submission type from the drop down box if you have not already done so.

4.2   QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

Please confirm that you are using the current version of the units by inserting the publication date and version number for the following:
- Unit Specifications
- Assessment Support Packs
- Guide to Assessing Workplace Core Skills

4.3   RATIONALE

Please provide a rationale for the accreditation/re-accreditation/amendment/extension/ withdrawal of the Workplace Core Skills.

TAB 5 - QUALIFICATION AMENDMENT/EXTENSION

NB. If you are in any doubt as to whether to submit an Amendment rather than a Re-accreditation submission, please contact your Accreditation Manager to discuss.

5.1   SUBMISSION TYPE

Please go back to Tab 1, Section 1.4 and select the submission type from the drop down box if you have not already done so.

Amendment (this is generally used where there has been minimal change).
An amendment submission is required in each of the following situations:

- Where there has been a change to a unit, a small number of units within the structure, or where some optional units are being added to an existing qualification (eg. where the qualification or the mandatory section of the qualification, has not been updated in its entirety)
- Where there has been a minor change to the Assessment Strategy or regulatory requirements
- Where there has been a change to the awarding partnership or awarding arrangements

5.2   QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

Please list the qualification titles, qualification codes and accreditation period of the qualifications for which an amendment and/or extension is requested.

5.3   RATIONALE

Please provide a rationale to support the amendment and/or extension of the qualifications.

Please clearly detail all the amendments, attach any relevant revised documentation and complete ***Tab 7 Qualification Structure and SCQF Credit Rating (Accreditation)***

NB. ***Tab 7 Qualification Structure and SCQF Credit Rating (Accreditation)*** does not need to be completed for Extension only submissions.

5.4   ACCREDITATION PERIOD

You may select a new accreditation period of up to 5 years. In addition, you should also select an certification end date (the date from the accreditation end date to the certification end date is also known as the lapsing period) for the qualification taking into account how long it will take an average learner/candidate to complete the qualification and be certificated. You should include a rationale for the dates requested.

If the qualification was developed by an SSC/B then they may be able to provide an indication of a possible accreditation period which aligns to their plans for qualification review.

Please note that the dates may be selected by ACG to align with other qualifications eg. where the same qualification is offered by a number of awarding bodies. ACG will notify you of the accreditation period.

5.5   COMMUNICATION OF CHANGES

Please indicate how you intend to communicate the proposed changes to all relevant stakeholders.

TAB 6 - QUALIFICATION WITHDRAWAL

6.1   QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

Please list the qualification titles, qualification codes and accreditation period of the qualifications for which a withdrawal is requested.

6.2   RATIONALE

Please outline why you are requesting the qualification be withdrawn. For example, no market demand/zero uptake for the qualification.

6.3   LEARNERS/CANDIDATES REGISTERED

Are there are learners/candidates currently undertaking the qualification? If so, how will you ensure they are given the opportunity to complete?

6.4   COMMUNICATION OF WITHDRAWAL

Please indicate how you intend to communicate the proposed withdrawal to all relevant stakeholders. This should include any providers/centres approved to offer even when they have no current registrations. It should also include SSC/Bs if appropriate.

TAB 7 - QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE AND SCQF CREDIT RATING (ACCREDITATION)

Tab 7 has not been protected so that awarding body representatives can add/ remove rows where necessary for the qualification structure. If the submission request is for more than one qualification, this grid can be copied and pasted into the next tab in order to record all structures within the request.

Please see Tab 7 for additional guidance on completion.

Appendix 1 – Accreditation Process

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