



Qualification Requirements: for the development of qualification products and accredited qualifications

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Requirements for qualification product approval and accreditation of qualifications

SQA Accreditation has a remit from the Scottish Government to accredit any type of qualification other than degrees. These typically include competence-based qualifications, including Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), and other qualifications that assess skills and/or knowledge and understanding.

Competence-based qualifications enable the assessment of competence, skills, knowledge and understanding in a specific occupation to the standard required in the workplace. SVQs are a specific type of competence-based qualification.

Other qualifications must also be formally assessed and externally quality assured. These could, for example, include exam-based qualifications, knowledge qualifications and Workplace Core Skills.

What do these requirements apply to?

These requirements apply to both qualification products submitted for approval and qualifications submitted for accreditation. We only accredit qualifications submitted by approved awarding bodies.

Qualification products must be approved and qualifications must be accredited by SQA Accreditation if they are:

- ◆ an SVQ
- ◆ intended to be included in a Scottish Apprenticeship
- ◆ required by legislation or an industry/sector regulator

Other qualification products and qualifications may be brought forward for approval and accreditation and must also meet the following requirements.

Qualification requirements

Our requirements fall into three categories. The categories apply with increasing specificity (so qualifications that must meet the requirements in category 2 must also meet the requirements in category 1; qualifications that must meet category 3 must also meet categories 1 and 2).

- 1 Requirements for all qualifications
- 2 Requirements for competence-based qualifications
- 3 Requirements for SVQs

1 Requirements for all qualifications

All qualifications must:

- 1.1 Be outcome based and have identified content and structure
- 1.2 Satisfy an identified need and demand
- 1.3 Include a definition of what the qualification measures and what the learner will achieve
- 1.4 Have been developed following a defined qualification development process
- 1.5 Include a defined maintenance and review process
- 1.6 Be capable of being assessed consistently and objectively
- 1.7 Specify processes for effective delivery and assessment
- 1.8 Define assessment methods, ensuring they are fit for purpose and result in fair and consistent assessment
- 1.9 Define quality assurance requirements, ensuring they are fit for purpose
- 1.10 Define expertise and qualification requirements for all personnel involved in delivery, assessment and quality assurance
- 1.11 Be credit rated and levelled for the SCQF, unless by exception
- 1.12 Follow SQA Accreditation's processes and guidance, as appropriate, for:
 - a. Qualification Product approval: *Developing Qualification Products for SQA Accreditation Approval: A guide for submitting organisations* (March 2022)
 - b. SCQF credit rating and levelling: *Credit Rating of SQA Accredited Qualifications for the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework: Guidance for Sector Skills Councils, Standard Setting Organisations, Awarding Bodies and Participants* (April 2014)
 - c. Qualification accreditation: *Developing Qualifications for Accreditation A Guide for Awarding Bodies* (May 2024)

2 Additional requirements for competence-based qualifications

In addition to the requirements in section 1, competence-based qualifications must also:

- 2.1 Include statements of competence, skills, knowledge and understanding that are capable of being measured over time
- 2.2 Define the assessment strategy and methodology, including:
 - a. Quality assurance requirements
 - b. What must be assessed in the workplace
 - c. What can be simulated and what are the requirements of a realistic working environment
 - d. Occupational expertise and qualification requirements of assessors and quality assurers
- 2.3 Demonstrate how National Occupational Standards (NOS) have been considered or are incorporated into the qualification

- 2.4 SQA Accreditation's titling conventions
- 2.5. Detail the qualification structure, showing mandatory, optional and additional units
- 2.6. Identify the combinations of units required to achieve the qualification

3 Additional requirements for SVQs

In addition to the requirements in sections 1 and 2, SVQs must also:

- 3.1 Have a one-to-one relationship between a National Occupational Standard (NOS) and each qualification unit
- 3.2 Have qualification products approved by SQA Accreditation
- 3.3 Have SCQF credit rating and levelling recommendations approved by SQA Accreditation
- 3.4 Show how the content of the NOS signposts to the relevant Workplace Core Skills