

SQA Accreditation Annual Review 2020–21

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Chief Executive's statement



SQA Accreditation has a statutory remit under the Education (Scotland) Act 1996 to accredit and quality assure qualifications and qualification products in Scotland. The work carried out by SQA Accreditation safeguards the interests of learners, apprentices, employers, funding bodies, providers, parents and Scottish Government.

During 2020–21, 69,545 learners were registered for qualifications that are accredited by us and 66,059 learners received a certificate for their accredited qualification. The number of candidates registered and certificated in 2020/21 is significantly down as a result of the pandemic — from 131,572 registrations and 104,210 certificated in the previous year as a result of the pandemic.

COVID-19 has impacted greatly on the vocational education landscape, as much of the learning has been undertaken remotely. Awarding bodies and sector bodies are to be commended for the innovation and flexibility in delivery they have shown over this period.

Throughout 2020–21, all SQA Accreditation staff also worked remotely and were able to continue to deliver all activities. We published guidance on using online and remote technology for delivery, assessment and quality assurance, and offered advice to awarding bodies. Provider monitoring visits (PMV) and Awarding Body audits were all carried out remotely. Accreditation of qualifications was unaffected as was our work on the National Occupational Standards Programme.

In 2020–2021, the Accreditation section reviewed and processed 637 submissions. This includes the approval of qualification products, accreditations, reaccreditation, extensions, amendments, withdrawals and credit rating of qualifications. Our Accreditation section has also supported Skills Development Scotland in implementing their new model for the development of Scottish Modern Apprenticeships.

We approved two new awarding bodies in the year, and we continue to seek opportunities to work with new organisations.

I would like to thank all of the staff in SQA Accreditation, in our approved awarding bodies and in the sector bodies for maintaining a level of activity which ensured that qualifications were available to learners in Scotland. Most importantly, I congratulate learners on their achievements.

Fiona Robertson
Chief Executive

1 Introduction

1.1 About SQA Accreditation

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has two distinct and autonomous parts:

- ◆ SQA the awarding body
- ◆ SQA Accreditation

SQA Accreditation has a statutory remit under Scottish legislation to accredit and quality assure qualifications in Scotland — thereby safeguarding the interests of learners, employers, parents, funding bodies, providers and Scottish Government.

We do this by independently approving and regulating awarding bodies operating in Scotland and accrediting their qualifications. We accredit any type of qualification, other than degrees, including:

- ◆ **Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)**
- ◆ **Regulatory and Licensing qualifications (R&L)** — qualifications that are required to perform regulated job roles, including security qualifications and personal licence certificates
- ◆ **‘Other’ qualifications** — including exam-based, and competence-based qualifications that are not SVQs nor Regulatory, including Diplomas, Certificates and Awards in subjects such as Accounting and Facilities Management

SQA Accreditation also plays a central role in advising and supporting Standards Setting Organisations (SSOs) in the development and review of National Occupational Standards, and also with qualification development. We are responsible for approving and quality assuring National Occupational Standards and qualification products including qualification structures, assessment strategies and Core Skills signposting.

In addition, SQA Accreditation is an approved Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) credit rating body and is the only body with the authority to credit rate SVQs.

SQA Accreditation consistently aims to work efficiently and effectively to fulfil its responsibilities. Our work is underpinned by a set of Regulatory Principles, Regulatory Principles Directives and the Accreditation Licence. Operational activities are driven by the responsive nature of our team and their aim to continually review and improve processes and systems for the benefit of all external and internal customers. Our three main areas of work are:

- ◆ accreditation of qualifications
- ◆ regulation
- ◆ research and statistics

This Annual Review provides a summary of the operational activities carried out by SQA Accreditation in 2020–21 as well as project group activity and other events. Key performance statistics relating to accredited qualifications and awarding body regulatory activity are also presented.

2 Operational activity 2020–21

SQA Accreditation’s annual operational activity from April 2020 to the end of March 2021 is summarised in this review. We provide an overview of significant developments in 2020–21 and details of how we met our operational objectives through project groups.

2.1 Standards and Frameworks commissioning

As with most areas of our work the pandemic presented additional challenges and pressures for our team of Accreditation Managers in the quality assurance and approval of the products reviewed and developed through the Standards and Frameworks commissioning programme in 2020–21.

Similar to previous years the strong partnership-working relationships, well established and new ones, with SSOs/Delivery Partners helped achieve good results in a difficult year or the outputs of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and Modern Apprenticeship Frameworks for Scotland. Again, working along with our quality assurance colleagues in Northern Ireland and Wales we supported the review, revision and production of National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Impacting many of the projects, the challenges and constraints associated with the pandemic were met with many creative and innovative accommodations and solutions by the SSOs/Delivery Partners. It is reasonable to suggest that we have all learned important lessons in considering the needs and benefits of adaptation when required or potentially beneficial.

Collective targets shared with all of our stakeholders remain integral to achieving the highest possible quality products for all who use them. Skills Development Scotland (SDS) continue to manage the commissioning and funding of the programme on behalf of the three Devolved Administrations and provide support to all involved.

3 Events

Due to COVID-19 there were no face-to-face events however SQA Accreditation did attend the relaunched Scottish Federation of Awarding Bodies Forum and hosted the inaugural Education and Labour Market Research Group seminar.

The Education and Labour Market Research Group seminar presenter was a PhD researcher from the University of Glasgow who discussed employer engagement in the vocational education sector. The seminar was attended by representatives from Scottish Government, Scottish Chambers of Commerce, Ofqual, Qualification Wales, Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) Regulation, among others. The goal of this new research group is to make data relating to education and the labour market more accessible to researchers which will in turn support government agencies as it will support evidence-based policymaking. Going forward there will be quarterly seminars which are

designed to help facilitate connections and to provide a platform for new research regarding education and the labour market.

4 Project groups

To ensure that the objectives identified in SQA Accreditation's *Operational Plan 2020–21* could be realised, a series of internal project groups were established. These project groups included representatives from each of the SQA Accreditation sections:

- ◆ Accreditation
- ◆ Regulation
- ◆ Information and Research
- ◆ Administration

The operational activities carried out by the project groups are summarised here.

4.1 SVQ Research Project

The Information and Research section designed a research project to evaluate whether SVQs were meeting the needs and experiences of stakeholders and learners. A project group consisting of members from all sections within SQA Accreditation was formed to:

- ◆ identify survey questions for learners and stakeholders
- ◆ provide opportunities to engage with awarding bodies and other appropriate stakeholders
- ◆ assist with the research process

Phase one of the research project is coming to a close as stakeholders from awarding bodies, Standards Setting Organisations and colleges (staff and learners), have been interviewed about their experiences with SVQs. We are keen to hear from employers as well but unfortunately due to COVID-19 we have been unable to engage with a sufficient number at this time. The employer perspective will continue to be an important consideration in phase two of the project.

The results from phase one of the project will be analysed using a program called Nvivo which will help to highlight the key themes which were discussed in the project sessions with stakeholders. These themes will then be explored further in a questionnaire to be sent out as a part of phase two.

This project and therefore the project group will continue this financial year 2021–22 and is part of the operational plan.

4.2 Regulatory Principles Review Project

Our Regulatory Principles (RPs) were last reviewed in 2014. Across 2019 to 2021 the review project team have worked to survey, review and consult with stakeholders on proposed changes to the RPs.

Despite delays due to COVID-19, the final version of the revised RPs were presented to the Accreditation Committee on 27 April 2021, and subject to a few amendments were approved. The revised RPs have now been published, along with our 'We Asked, You Said, We Did' document, which highlights all the changes in detail, on our website.

The publication of these documents has been communicated to all stakeholders and was presented at an awarding body forum hosted by the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB).

The number of principles has increased from 15 to 18 and a new principle introduced about risk.

As of 1 November 2021 all awarding bodies will be regulated against the new RPs. The Regulation section continues to work in the background to ensure that internal systems are aligned for the implementation of the new principles as of this date.

4.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Strategies Project Group

Our operational plan for 2020–21 included Deliverables for developing a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and a Communications Strategy. The clear relationship between these two pieces of work allowed this to be undertaken by one project group with representation from across SQA Accreditation.

The project groups agreed set targets to:

- ◆ improve how we engage with our stakeholders
- ◆ improve how we communicate externally
- ◆ ensure people understand what we do
- ◆ demonstrate the importance of our work
- ◆ demonstrate the success of our work
- ◆ change perceptions and behaviour where necessary
- ◆ promote the distinction between SQA Accreditation and SQA Awarding Body
- ◆ better understand what Stakeholders need from us.

It was recognised that while there are many positive aspects to how we regularly engage with our stakeholders there is scope to enhance how and when we connect with specific stakeholders, or groups of stakeholders. There are opportunities for improvement in how and when we communicate. We should look to better utilise the channels available and to consider new options and possibilities for communications as a matter of course.

Operating in conjunction with the communication strategy the primary objective for stakeholder engagement is improving how we engage with key stakeholders. In doing so we

will not be satisfied with past successes and must strive to enhance how we engage. Understanding our stakeholders' developing needs and expectations is integral to this.

We need to better understand what our stakeholders need from us and how we can improve and we work together. Opportunities for collaborative engagement, partnership working and for delivering collective positive outcomes will be sought and encouraged.

When using the communication channels at our disposal we will consider how key messages are to be conveyed and tailored for different stakeholders.

Utilising the available corporate support functions of the Marketing and Communications directorate will help increase and improve our engagement. A primary objective from this is to review and improve the SQA Accreditation website.

These two strategies have been developed with proposed actions already employed — such as making better use of our Newsletter and engaging more with corporate support functions. The strategies will be further implemented in 2021–22 and beyond.

4.4 COVID-19

As with all businesses, SQA Accreditation worked remotely for most of 2020 and continued to do so through the summer of 2021.

When the first lockdown was announced, there was a concern that all qualification delivery and assessment would come to a halt. As we spoke with our approved awarding bodies, it became clear that most could continue to deliver and assess, providing that the public health guidance was met. Some qualifications required a temporary amendment to their assessment process while a few awarding bodies made permanent amendments to the assessment. Most of the amendments made use of existing technology including the use of remote invigilation. Some awarding bodies suspended qualifications for a period. We are grateful for the support of the approved awarding bodies in ensuring that qualifications continued to be available to learners.

While remote invigilation is not new, it was unfamiliar to us. We engaged positively with a number of third-party providers of remote invigilation so that we could understand the technology and the potential impact on how we would regulate this.

We also published guidance on using online and remote technology for delivery, assessment, and quality assurance which we hope has been of assistance.

Unsurprisingly the number of candidates being registered and certificated was down against the previous year. Quarter 1, which coincided with the first lockdown saw a significant reduction. There has been a steady improvement in quarters 2 and 3. When we gather the data for quarter 4, we will get a fuller picture of the impact on candidates.

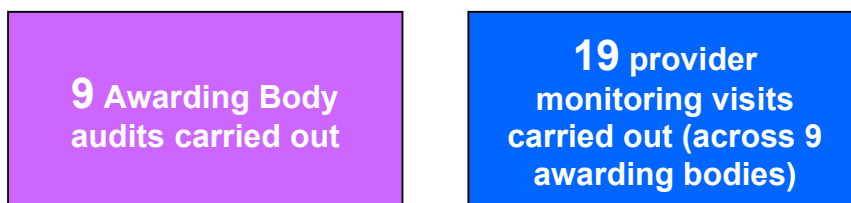
5 Audit activity 2020–21

SQA Accreditation’s regulatory function includes the approval of awarding bodies, audits of Awarding Bodies, and provider monitoring visits. This section provides an overview of regulatory activity for the period 2020–21. (Data has only been included in the following analyses where reports had been agreed by both regulator and Awarding Body by the end of 2020–21.) It should be noted that the normal expected quality assurance activities were inhibited, due to the global pandemic. This caused resource issues across the majority of awarding bodies and providers. Planned activity had to be rescheduled and re-allocated and in some cases moved into the next year’s planning. That being said, all planned audits were conducted remotely. However, provider monitoring output wasn’t as high as previous years due to temporary closure of providers.

SQA Accreditation carries out monitoring of all SQA-approved awarding bodies. In 2020–21, SQA Accreditation’s quality assurance processes were based on a range of measures, and compliance was assessed against the [Regulatory Principles \(2014\)](#) and the associated [Regulatory Principles Directives](#). All analysis in this section is based on the audit and provider monitoring activity during this period.

Awarding body audits are based on a three-year cycle, depending on their level of risk. Provider monitoring visits aim to check the effectiveness of the awarding body’s systems and enable SQA Accreditation to identify any areas of concern that may help to inform our regulatory activities and safeguard the learner experience.

Following audit and PMV activity, SQA Accreditation conducted 9 Awarding Body audits and 19 provider monitoring visits.



5.1 Awarding bodies

SQA Accreditation is responsible for approving awarding bodies to deliver qualifications of social, economic, environmental or cultural benefit to Scotland.

To achieve approval, organisations must demonstrate that they can meet SQA Accreditation’s Regulatory Requirements. In 2020–21 two organisations gained SQA Accreditation approved awarding body status: REHIS and FireQual. Awarding Body status for PAA/VQ-SET and ESB was withdrawn in the financial year 2020–21.

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland, often referred to by the acronym REHIS, is an independent, self-financing registered Scottish charity, whose main objectives are to promote environmental health for the benefit of the community by:

- 1 stimulating general interest in and disseminating knowledge concerning environmental health
- 2 promoting education and training in matters relating to environmental health; and
- 3 maintaining, by examination or otherwise, high standards of professional practice and conduct on the part of environmental health officers in Scotland

This awarding body currently has two accredited qualifications:

- ◆ Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders at SCQF Level 6
- ◆ Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders (Refresher) at SCQF Level 6

FireQual, is the trading name of BAFE (British Approvals for Fire Equipment) and is a specialist Awarding Body for the fire protection industry working for the betterment of knowledge and skills and to help support quality within the fire safety industry.

This awarding body currently has five accredited qualifications:

- ◆ Award in Fundamentals of the Recommendations for Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems in Non-Domestic Buildings at SCQF level 6
- ◆ Award in Fundamentals of the Recommendations for Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems in Domestic Buildings at SCQF level 6
- ◆ FireQual Certificate in Fire Safety Enforcement Officers (Scotland) at SCQF level 7
- ◆ FireQual Diploma in Fire Safety Enforcement Officers (Scotland)
- ◆ FireQual Diploma in Fire Safety Enforcement Officers (Scotland)

At the end of the operational year 2020–21, there were 37 awarding bodies approved by SQA Accreditation. The [full list of current approved awarding bodies](#) is on our website.

5.2 Analysis of Issues and Recommendations

Issues are recorded by the audit team where evidence shows that the awarding body is not compliant with SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles, posing a potential risk to learners and/or to the integrity of the qualification. Awarding bodies must address the Issues via an action plan. During an audit or provider monitoring visit (PMV), an Issue may be raised against multiple Regulatory Principles and/or Regulatory Directives.

A Recommendation can be noted if the audit team considers that an awarding body's systems and processes meet the Regulatory Principles but it identifies that there is potential for improvement. There is no requirement for the awarding body to take action in response to this, but it would be seen as good practice and demonstrate continuous improvement. During an audit or provider monitoring visit, one Recommendation may be raised against multiple Regulatory Principles and/or Regulatory Directives. Our regulatory requirements can be viewed in the [Regulation section](#) of our SQA Accreditation website.

- ◆ The total number of audit Issues raised in 2020–21 was 17.
- ◆ The total number of PMV Issues raised in 2020–21 was 28.
- ◆ The total number of recommendations raised in 2020–21 was 50 (31 audit, 19 PMV).

The following tables show the number of Issues and Recommendations recorded against each of the principles during audit and PMV activity for 2020–21 (this will not match with total Issues above as one Issue can be assigned to more than one principle):

Regulatory Principle	Issues raised at Audit	Issues raised at PMV	Recommendations
Principle 1	0	0	2
Principle 2	0	0	0
Principle 3	3	0	0
Principle 4	0	0	4
Principle 5	5	5	7
Principle 6	1	18	7
Principle 7	3	0	1
Principle 8	0	0	1
Principle 9	1	0	0
Principle 10	2	10	8
Principle 11	0	4	2
Principle 12	1	3	3
Principle 13	1	3	1
Principle 14	0	3	1
Principle 15	3	1	1
Total	20	47	38

Table 1: Number of Issues and Recommendations by Regulatory Principle

The higher number of Issues identified under Principles 6 and 10 at provider level highlights the strength of the PMV process in identifying areas for improvement for awarding bodies at an operational level. The number of Issues identified is reviewed by the Regulation section in order to identify trends and to ensure fitness for purpose of the Regulatory Requirements.

During 2020–21, audit and provider monitoring visits identified that the greatest number of Issues were recorded against Regulatory Principles 6, and 10:

- ◆ Regulatory Principle 6: The awarding body and its providers shall maintain accurate documents, records and data.
- ◆ 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.

Various Recommendations were identified during audit and provider monitoring visits. The greatest number of recommendations were recorded against Regulatory Principles 10 and 7:

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Regulatory Principle 7: The awarding body shall have effective arrangements for communicating with its staff, stakeholders and SQA Accreditation.

Regulatory Principles Directive (RPDIR)	Issues raised at Audit	Issues raised at PMV	Recommendations
RPDIR 1	0	0	0
RPDIR 2	0	0	0
RPDIR 3	2	0	0
RPDIR 4	0	0	0
RPDIR 5	0	0	0

Table 2: Number of Issues and Recommendations by Regulatory Principles Directive

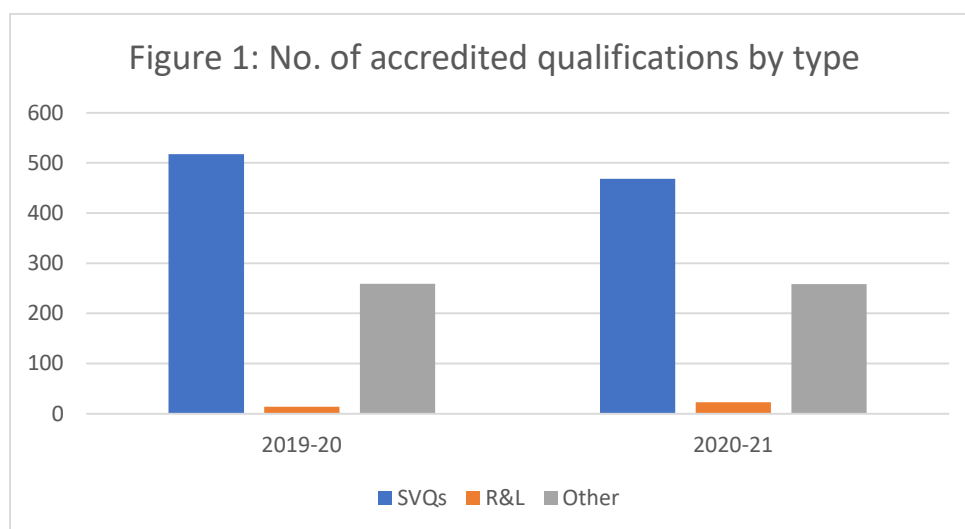
Issues were raised only against the Regulatory Principles Directive 3, which concerns 'Logos and Certificate Requirements for SQA Accredited Qualifications'.

6 Accreditation activity 2020–21

SQA Accreditation’s core functions include the approval of awarding bodies, approval of qualification products, accreditation of qualifications, and credit rating approval. This section provides an overview of accreditation activity for the period 2020–21.

6.1 Accredited qualifications

At the end of 2020–21, SQA Accreditation had a total of **749 accredited qualifications**¹. This is made up of SVQs, Regulatory and Licensing, and ‘Other’ qualifications:



6.1.1 Accredited Scottish Vocational Qualifications

At the end of 2020–21 there were **468 accredited SVQs**, which is a decrease of 49 qualifications compared to the previous financial year’s total of 517.

SVQs were offered by 16 approved awarding bodies, and account for 62.5% of all accredited qualifications.

6.1.2 Accredited Regulatory and Licensing qualifications

At the end of 2020–21, there were **23 Regulatory and Licensing qualifications accredited** — an increase of 9 qualifications compared to 14 in 2019–20.

Regulatory and Licensing qualifications are offered by eight approved awarding bodies, and account for 3.1% of all currently accredited qualifications.

¹ Qualifications that have lapsed are not included.

6.1.3 Accredited 'Other' qualifications

At the end of 2020–21 there were **258 'Other' qualifications accredited**, which is a decrease of 1 qualification on the previous year.

'Other' accredited qualifications are currently offered by 31 approved awarding bodies and account for 34.4% of all accredited qualifications.

6.2 Withdrawn qualifications

A total of 83 qualifications were withdrawn during 2020–21. This total comprised:

- ◆ 49 Scottish Vocational Qualifications
- ◆ 5 Regulatory and Licensing qualifications
- ◆ 29 'Other' qualifications

The most common reasons for withdrawal included:

- ◆ low or zero uptake, resulting in SQA Accreditation invoking its [Zero Uptake Policy](#)
- ◆ no future demand

For further detailed information on the performance of our accredited qualifications on a quarterly basis, please see our [Quarterly Statistics Reports](#).

6.3 Market performance

Data on the performance of SQA accredited qualifications is collected from approved awarding bodies on a quarterly basis. Quarterly data is compiled to produce financial year totals for candidate registrations and certifications. Tables 3–6 present annual totals for SVQs, Regulatory and Licensing, and 'Other' qualifications, as well as Workplace Core Skills, and compares the data to previous years' totals.

In 2020–21 qualification uptake was significantly impacted by COVID-19.

6.3.1 SVQ market performance

The total number of registrations and certifications is tracked and compared to previous financial years.

In 2020–21 the number of registrations and certifications showed a large decrease compared to 2019–20:

- ◆ registrations decreased by 64% (18,036 registrations)
- ◆ certifications decreased by 48% (11,208 certifications)

Year	Registrations	± (%)	Certifications	± (%)
2016–17	44,538	-4	35,220	+4
2017–18	43,838	-2	33,414	-5
2018–19	44,811	+2	33,763	+1
2019–20	46,273	+3	34,698	+3
2020–21	28,237	-64	23,490	-48

Table 3: SVQ registrations and certifications by financial year

6.3.2 Regulatory and Licensing qualifications market performance

Regulatory and Licensing registrations and certifications showed large changes in comparison to 2019–20:

- ◆ registrations decreased by 68% (12,721 registrations)
- ◆ certifications decreased by 68% (13,381 certifications)

Year	Registrations	± (%)	Certifications	± (%)
2016–17	30,462	-1	29,199	0
2017–18	22,687	-26	20,408	-30
2018–19	21,488	-5	21,542	+6
2019–20	19,618	-8	19,547	-9
2020–21	6,897	-68	6,166	-68

Table 4: Regulatory and Licensing qualifications registrations and certifications by financial year

6.3.3 'Other' qualifications market performance

Large changes occurred in 'Other' qualification registrations and certifications in 2020–21, compared to 2019–20:

- ◆ registrations decreased by 46% (30,332 registrations)
- ◆ certifications decreased by 65% (32,462 certifications)

Year	Registrations	± (%)	Certifications	± (%)
2016–17	37,975	-3	24,534	+4
2017–18	50,313	+32	33,874	+38
2018–19	61,361	+22	48,845	+44
2019–20	65,681	+7	49,980	+2
2020–21	35,349	-46	17,518	-65

Table 5: 'Other' qualifications registrations and certifications by financial year

The performance of ‘other’ competence-based accredited qualifications will continue to be monitored on a quarterly and annual basis.

While SVQs remain as the Scottish Government’s qualification of choice for inclusion in Modern Apprenticeship Frameworks, ‘Other’ accredited qualifications may be approved for inclusion where there is not an alternative SVQ. As a result, an increasing number of ‘Other’ qualifications are now included in Modern Apprenticeship Frameworks, which could go some way to explaining the growing annual uptake of these qualifications.

6.3.4 Workplace Core Skills market performance

Workplace Core Skills were specifically developed to assess core skills in a work environment. They contribute to employability and are a component of Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland.

At the end of 2020–21 there were 145 accredited Workplace Core Skills.

Registrations for Workplace Core Skills have decreased by 39% (14,652 registrations) compared to 2019–20, and certifications have decreased by 39% (12,954 certifications).

Year	Registrations	± (%)	Certifications	± (%)
2016–17	37,295	-3	32,545	+5
2017–18	38,654	+4	30,636	-6
2018–19	38,093	-1	30,536	-0.3
2019–20	37,689	-1	32,956	+8
2020–21	23,037	-39	20,002	-39

Table 6: Workplace Core Skills registrations and certifications by financial year

The number of registrations and certifications of qualifications and Workplace Core Skills is continually monitored, and the information is published in SQA Accreditation’s Quarterly Statistics Reports, which can be found in the [Research and Statistics](#) section of our dedicated SQA Accreditation website.

6.4 SQA Accreditation — key figures summary

19 Provider Monitoring Visits performed reports published	9 Awarding body audits carried out
69,545 Candidate registrations across all accredited qualifications	66,059 Candidate certifications across all accredited qualifications
2 New awarding body received approval by SQA Accreditation	37 Awarding bodies in total approved by SQA Accreditation

7 Our plan for 2021–22

We will continue to support the Scottish Government with regards to the Modern Apprenticeship Programme, as well as supporting the Standards and Frameworks programme, by offering advice and guidance on continuous improvement with particular focus on commissioning and quality assurance systems and processes.

We will investigate the feasibility of developing a fast-track approval process for awarding bodies which are approved by Ofqual, Qualification Wales or CCEA Regulation. In so doing, we would hope in future to be able to develop a model which reduces the burden on awarding bodies that are approved by another regulator in the UK, when they seek approval from us.

We have neared the end of phase one of our review into the SVQ brand. We have consulted with learners, employers, awarding bodies, and Standards Setting Organisations. We have held upward of 20 sessions and are in the process of analysing these results which will inform phase 2 which will start in the second half of 2021. This research will help to determine what changes, if any, need to be made to the SVQ model to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

Having consulted on our Regulatory Principles in 2020 to 2021, we plan to fully implement the new principles in November 2021. The number of principles has increased to 18 from the previous 15, which is designed to make the regulatory process more straightforward.

Appendix 1: Approved awarding bodies

SQA Accreditation approved awarding bodies as of 31 March 2021.

Abbreviation	Awarding body
AFS	Alcohol Focus Scotland
ASQ	Associated Sports Qualifications
AAT	Association of Accounting Technicians
ACCA	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
BIIAB	British Institute of Innkeepers Awarding Body
CIH	Chartered Institute of Housing
CMI	Chartered Management Institute
Not Applicable	City & Guilds of London Institute
Not Applicable	EduQual
ECITB	Engineering Construction Industry Training Board
EAL	Excellence, Achievement and Learning Limited
Not Applicable	FireQual Ltd.
FAA	First Aid Awards Limited
FAQ	Future (Awards & Qualifications) Limited
GQA	GQA Qualifications Limited
Not Applicable	Highfield Qualifications
IMI	IMI Awards Limited
ITC	ITC First
Not Applicable	Lantra Awards Limited
MPQC	Mineral Products Qualifications Council
NEBOSH	National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health
Not Applicable	Pearson Education Limited
Not Applicable	PIABC Limited
QFI	Qualifications for Industry
RAD	Royal Academy of Dance
Not applicable	RSL
Not Applicable	SafeCert Awards Limited
STA	Safety Training Awards Limited
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority

Not Applicable	SFEDI Awards
Not Applicable	SFJ Awards
Not Applicable	Smart Awards Ltd.
BHSQL	The British Horse Society Qualifications Limited
Not Applicable	The Prince's Trust
REHIS	The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland
VTCT	Vocational Training Charitable Trust
WCSM	Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers