Annual Statistics Report

Report on accredited qualifications

1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021

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An Assurance of Quality

Contents

Executive summary

This report provides an overview of qualification activity for SQA Accreditation approved awarding bodies for 2020-21 financial year (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021). The data used to form this report is obtained directly from awarding bodies as part of their quarterly submission requirements. Therefore, the awarding bodies are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the data supplied.

Previously, reports of this nature were generated on a quarterly basis, and there was no financial year report. This has been adapted and the following reports will be generated:

1. **Quarterly Highlights Reports** – a summary of key figures from each quarter, produced at the end of each quarter and published on the SQA Accreditation website the following month

2. **Annual Statistics Reports** – a more detailed overview of key facts and figures, produced at the end of each financial year and published on the website in June.

You can view our published reports in the [Research and Statistics](#) section of our website.

69,545 registrations in 2020-21

66,059 certifications in 2020-21

1,222 different qualifications*

- 832 SVQs
- 36 R&L Qualifications
- 354 'Other" qualifications

*includes qualifications that have passed their lapse date

1 Introduction

SQA Accreditation is the national accrediting body for Scotland with a statutory remit under Scottish legislation to accredit and quality assure qualifications in Scotland. Although part of the Scottish Qualifications Authority, SQA Accreditation is distinct and autonomous to SQA's awarding function.

SQA Accreditation sets and specifies the requirements for accrediting qualifications to safeguard and support the needs of learners, parents, funding bodies, employers, providers and Scottish Government. We do this by promoting and maintaining public confidence in accredited qualifications and approved awarding bodies.

The information shown has been produced from information provided by approved awarding bodies. This data covers SQA accredited qualifications during the financial year 2020-21 (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021) and focuses on those candidates who were:

♦ registered for an SQA accredited qualification
♦ certificated for an SQA accredited qualification

At the point of accreditation, all qualifications are allocated a qualification type and qualification category, which are used to classify qualifications in this report. This report provides information on the number of registrations and certifications according to awarding body, area of competence, qualification type and level. Analyses of uptake based on qualification developer and Workplace Core Skills are also included. Data may be subject to revision in subsequent reports if any discrepancies are identified.

For upcoming data submissions, the following deadline dates apply and must be adhered to by all awarding bodies to ensure consistency and accuracy of data in future reports:

Quarter	Submission deadline
Quarter 1 (1 April – 30 June 2021)	14 July 2021
Quarter 2 (1 July – 30 September 2021)	14 October 2021
Quarter 3 (1 October – 31 December 2021)	14 January 2022
Quarter 4 (1 January – 31 March 2021)	14 April 2022

2 Annual statistics

This report covers all qualification types that we accredit, categorised as follows:

♦ Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)
♦ Regulatory and Licensing qualifications (R&L)
♦ 'Other' accredited qualifications
  • Including competence-based qualifications

SQA Accreditation has a statutory remit to accredit SVQs and Regulatory and Licencing qualifications as well as accrediting 'Other' qualifications on a voluntary basis. Where these qualifications form part of the mandatory section of Modern Apprenticeship (MA) frameworks, they must be accredited by SQA Accreditation.
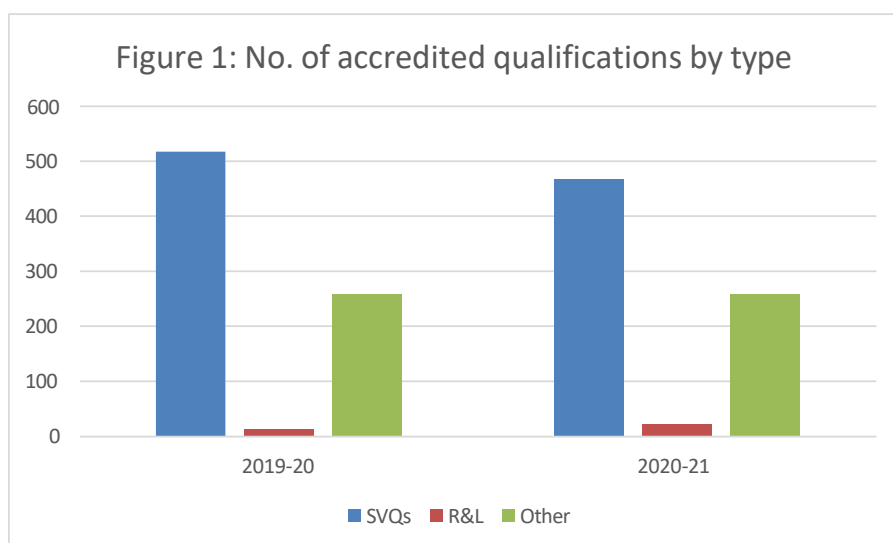
The statistics in this report are based on data submitted to us by our approved awarding bodies over the course of 2020–21. Awarding bodies are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the data submitted.

2.1 Currently accredited qualifications

At the end of Q4 of 2020–21 there were 749 live accredited qualifications.[1]:

♦ **468 SVQs** (62.5%)
♦ **23 Regulatory and Licensing qualifications** (3.1%)
♦ **258 'Other' qualifications** (34.4%)

[1] Note that this total does not include qualifications that are within their lapsing period

Figure 1: No. of accredited qualifications by type

The total number of accredited qualifications has decreased by 41 qualifications since the 2020-21 financial year.

2.2 Top ten registrations and certifications

During 2020-21, the qualification with the highest number of registrations was the NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety. This qualification also had the highest registration numbers in 2017–18. Table 1 shows the top ten qualifications in terms of registration numbers across 2020-21.

Qualification title	No. of registrations	Qualification type
NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety	6,923	Other
SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6	3,429	SVQ
Safecert SCQF Level 6 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work	2,673	Other
SVQ in Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF Level 7	2,583	SVQ
SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7	2,570	SVQ
Award in Emergency First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6	1,675	Other
Award in Emergency First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6	1,541	Other
Award in First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6	1,235	Other
Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders at SCQF Level 6	1,186	Regulatory
SVQ 2 in Performing Engineering Operations at SCQF Level 5	1,044	SVQ

Table 1: Top 10 performing qualification in terms of registrations

The qualification with the highest number of certifications (demonstrated in Table 2) was the SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6. Table 2 shows the top ten qualifications — based on the number of certifications — for 2020-21.

Qualification title	No. of certifications	Qualification type
SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6	2,720	SVQ
Safecert SCQF Level 6 Award in Emergency First Aid at Work	2,673	Other
NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety	2,402	Other
SVQ in Social Services (Children and Young People) at SCQF Level 7	2,269	SVQ
SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 7	1,907	SVQ
Award in Emergency First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6	1,662	Other
Award in Emergency First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6	1,536	Other
Award in First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6	1,100	Other
Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders at SCQF Level 6	1,038	Regulatory
SVQ 2 in Performing Engineering Operations at SCQF Level 5	904	SVQ

Table 2: Top 10 performing qualifications in terms of certifications

2.3 Analysis by qualification type

SQA Accreditation has collected qualification data from approved awarding bodies for numerous years and as a result is able to identify trends and present several years of data. The data that is gathered informs analysis across a variety of sectors and all types of accredited qualifications without limiting statistics to SVQs. This should give a complete picture of the landscape for accredited qualifications.

2.3.1 Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)

- **28,237 registrations** and **23,490 certifications**
- Offered by **16 Awarding Bodies**
- Representing **40.6% of all registrations**
- **832** different SVQs
- Representing **41.9% of all certifications**
- **SVQ in Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6** was the most popular: **3,429 registrations**

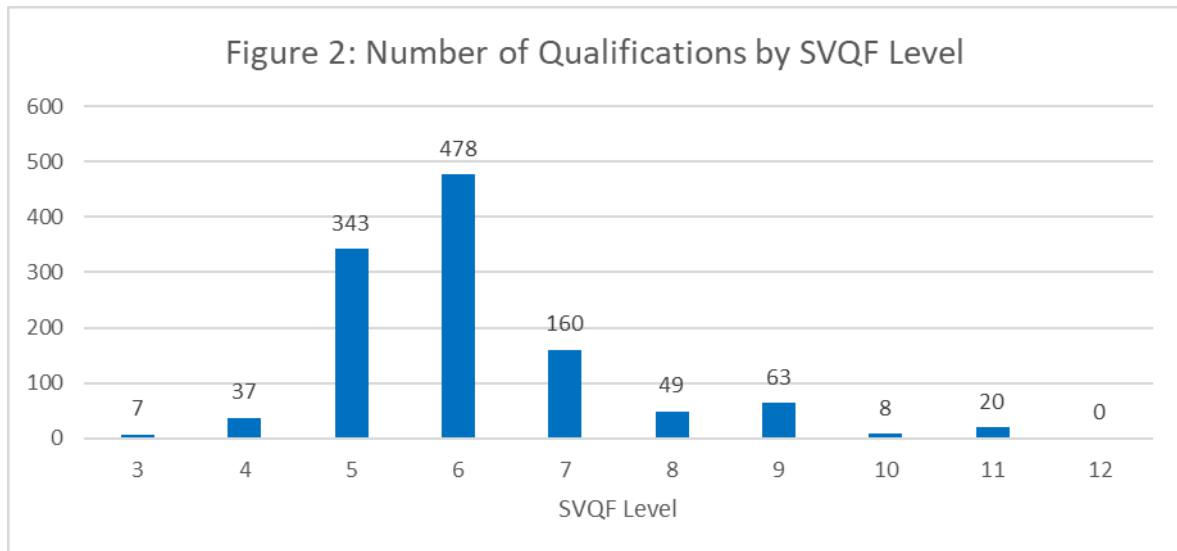### 2.3.2 Regulatory and Licensing (R&L) qualifications

- **6,897 registrations** and **6,166 certifications**
- Offered by **8 Awarding Bodies**
- Representing **9.9% of all registrations**
- **36** different qualifications
- Representing **10.0% of all certifications**
- **Scottish Certificate for Personal Licence Holders at SCQF Level 6** was the most popular: **1,186 registrations**

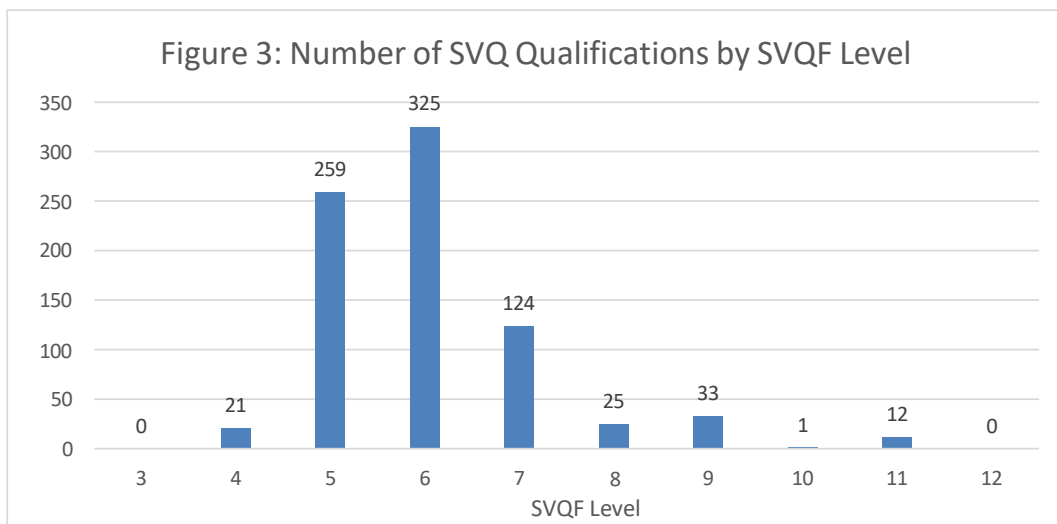### 2.3.3 All other accredited qualifications ('Other')

- **34,411 registrations** and **26,403 certifications**
- Offered by **31 Awarding Bodies**
- Representing **49.5% of all registrations**
- **354** different qualifications
- Representing **47.1% of all certifications**
- **NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety** was the most popular: **6,923 registrations**

2.4 Analysis by SCQF level

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is the national qualifications framework for Scotland. The framework uses two measures – the level of a qualification and the number of credit points awarded – to allow comparison of the various Scottish qualifications. The level of the qualification indicates the level of difficulty and the number of credit points indicative the length of time it takes to complete a particular qualification.

Figure 2: Number of Qualifications by SVQF Level

The framework has 12 levels – ranging from National Qualifications through to Doctoral Degrees and Professional Apprenticeships. SQA Accreditation's qualification provision covers SCQF Level 3 to Level 11, with the largest proportion of credit rated qualifications sitting at SCQF levels 5-6. This is demonstrated in the following figure:

Figure 3: Number of SVQ Qualifications by SVQF Level

*Not all 1,222 qualifications have been credit rated.

Looking at SVQs, the majority of these qualifications also sit at SCQF Level 5 and 6 - which is expected as these would mainly have been at SVQ Levels 2 and 3 using the original titling convention of SVQ Level 2 and 3.
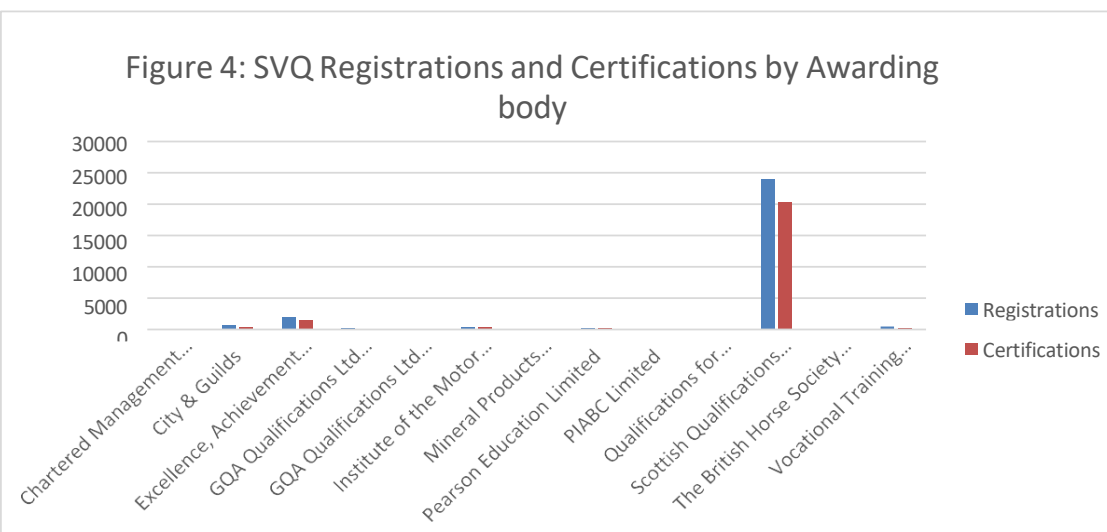
Many more SVQs are available at levels 5 and 6, as shown in Figure 3.

The higher numbers of qualifications at these levels is due to SVQs at SCQF levels 5, 6 and 7 forming part of a considerable number of Modern Apprenticeship (MA) frameworks.
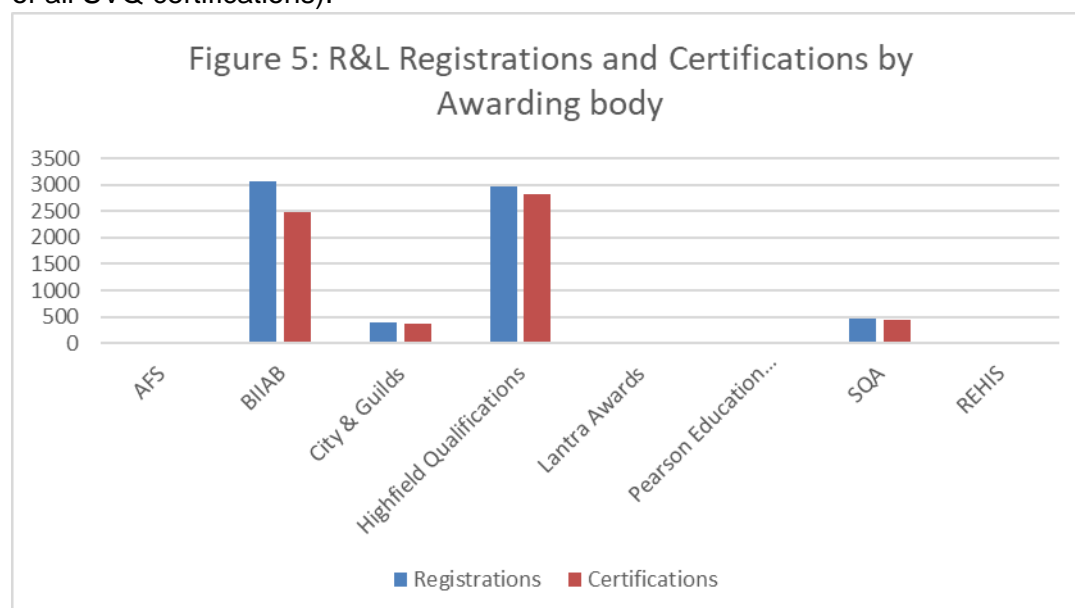
♦ 71.8% of SCQF level 5 SVQs are present in MA frameworks
♦ 57.2% of SCQF level 6 SVQs
♦ and 60.5% of SCQF level 7 SVQs
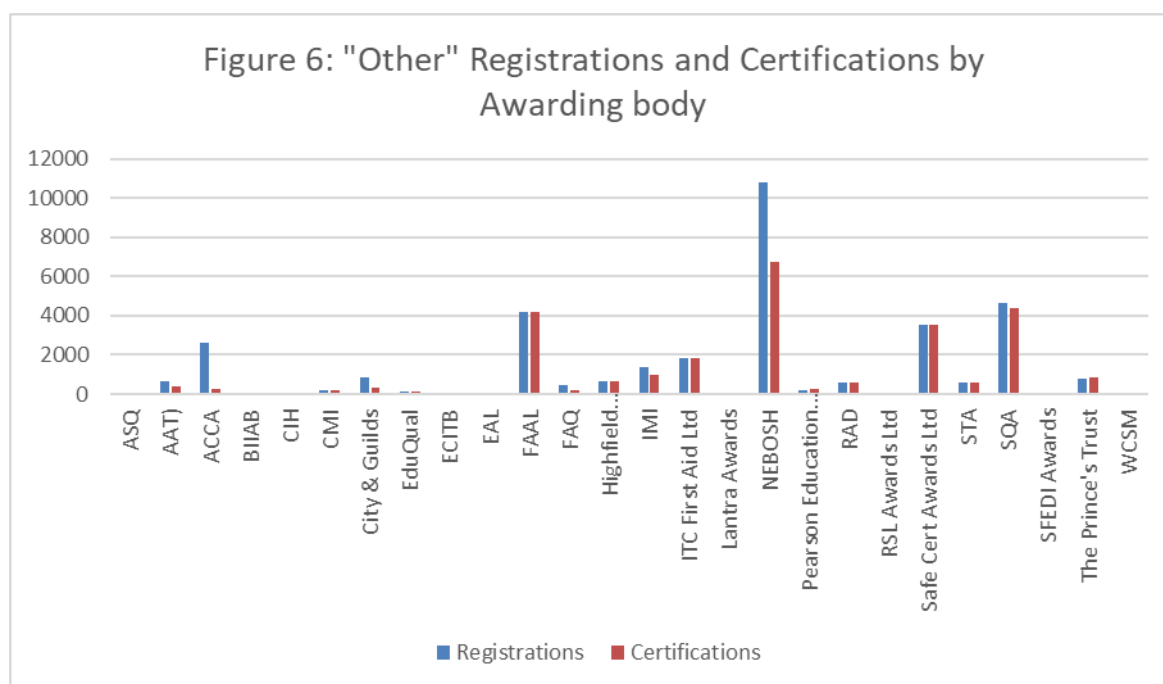
2.5 Analysis by awarding body

Awarding bodies tend to focus on specific qualification types, with exceptions such as SQA, City & Guilds, and Pearson offering accredited qualifications across all types. Please note that the scale in the graphs below has been altered to make them more easily interpreted.

Figure 4: SVQ Registrations and Certifications by Awarding body

During 2020-21 the awarding body with the highest number of SVQ registrations overall was SQA, with 24,006 registrations (85% of all SVQ registrations). SQA awarding body also reported the highest number of SVQ certifications overall, with 20,375 certifications (86.7% of all SVQ certifications).

Figure 5: R&L Registrations and Certifications by Awarding body

For R&L qualifications (Figure 5), the top awarding body for registrations was British Institute of Innkeepers Awarding Body (BIIAB), with 3,067 registrations (44.5% of all R&L registrations). Highfield Qualifications had the most certifications, with a total number of 2,823 certifications (45.9% of all R&L certifications).

Figure 6: "Other" Registrations and Certifications by Awarding body

NEBOSH was the awarding body with the most registrations and certifications for 'Other' qualifications with 10,787 registrations (31.3% of all 'Other' registrations) and 6,725 certifications (25.5% of all 'Other' certifications).

The following awarding bodies indicated that they had no registrations or certifications in 2020-21 for any of their accredited qualifications:

♦ FireQual
♦ SFJ Awards
♦ Smart Awards Ltd.
♦ English Speaking Board (ESB).

Qualifications and awarding bodies with zero uptake are monitored regularly, and where there is no activity for a two-year period, the Accreditation and/or Regulation manager will discuss the reasons for this with the awarding body (as described in SQA Accreditation's Zero Uptake policy).
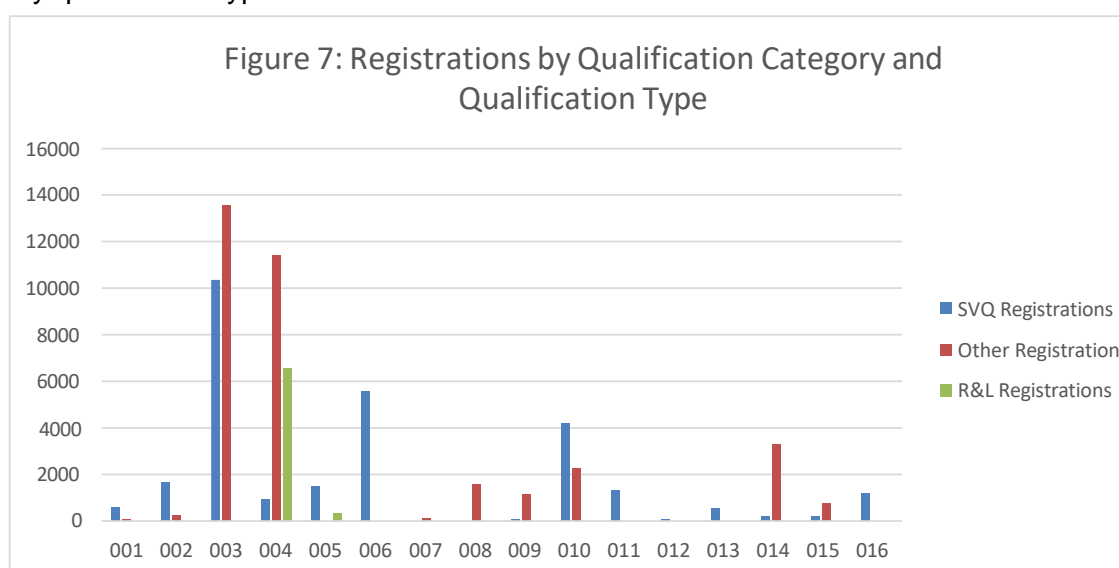
2.6 Analysis by qualification category

At the point of accreditation, each qualification is assigned to one of the following 16 qualification categories:

001	Land-based and Aquaculture
002	Business administration
003	Health care, Social Care and Childcare
004	Protective Services
005	Catering, Hospitality and Tourism
006	Construction
007	Creative and Design
008	IT and Digital
009	Education and Training
010	Engineering and Manufacturing
011	Hair and Beauty
012	Science and Mathematics
013	Retail
014	Legal and Financial
015	Sports and Active Leisure
016	Transport and Logistics

These classifications are combined with registration and certification data submitted by awarding bodies to produce the statistics below. Please note the scale in the graphs below has been altered so they can be more easily interpreted.

2.6.1 Registrations by qualification category

Figure 7 provides an overview of registrations for qualification category, further broken down by qualification type.

Figure 7: Registrations by Qualification Category and Qualification Type

The qualification category with the highest number of SVQ registrations was 003 Health Care, Social Care and Childcare:
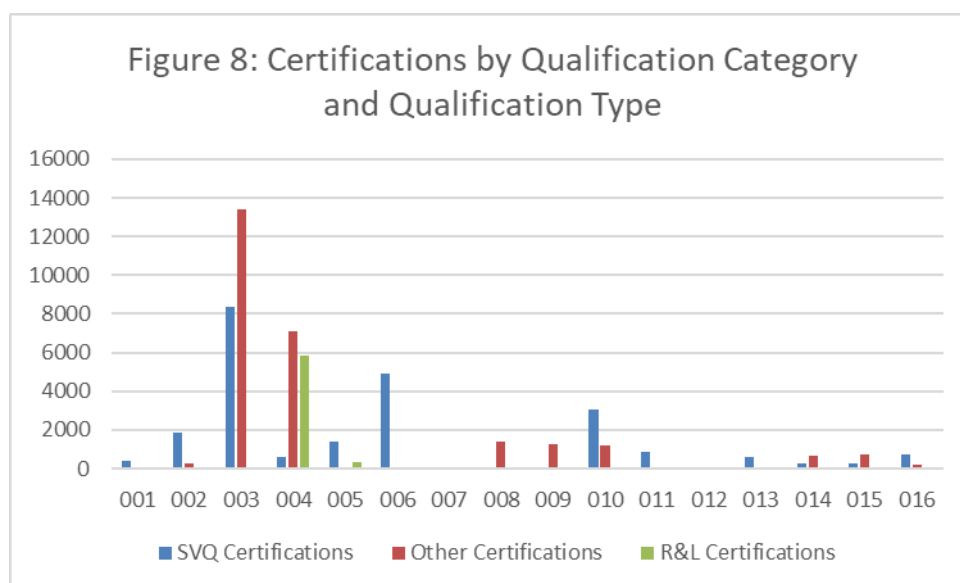
♦ 10,356 registrations, representing 36.7% of SVQ registrations during 2020-21

The qualification category with the highest number of Regulatory and Licensing registrations was 004 Protective Services:

♦ 6,567 registrations, representing 95.2% of R&L registrations during 2020-21

The qualification category with the highest number of 'Other' registrations was 003 Health Care, Social Care and Childcare:

♦ 13,550 registrations, representing 39.4% of 'Other' registrations during 2020-21

Figure 8: Certifications by Qualification Category and Qualification Type

2.6.2 Certifications by qualification category

Figure 8 shows the number of certifications by qualification category for each qualification type.

The qualification category that had the highest number of SVQ certifications was 003 Health, Social Care and Childcare:

♦ 8,389 certifications, representing 35.7% of SVQ certifications in 2020-21

The qualification category with the highest number of R&L certifications was 004 Protective Services:

♦ 5,840 certifications, representing 94.7% of R&L certifications in 2020-21

The qualification category that had the highest number of certifications for 'Other' qualifications was also 003 Health, Social Care and Childcare:

♦ 13,376 certifications, representing 50.7% of 'Other' certifications in 2020-21

2.7 Analysis by qualifications developer

A breakdown of registrations and certifications by qualification developer is presented in Figures 9,10 and 11.
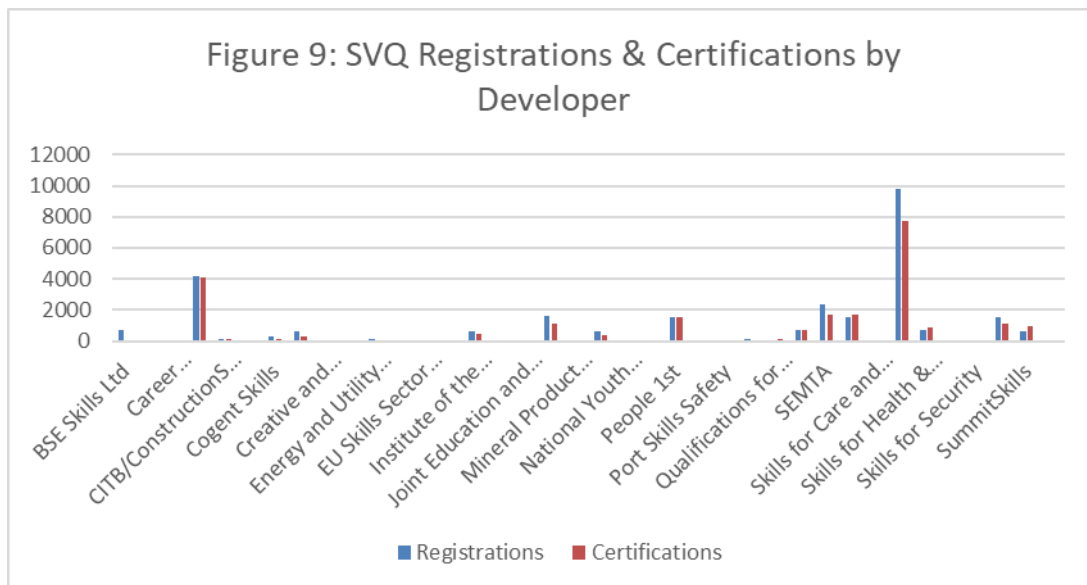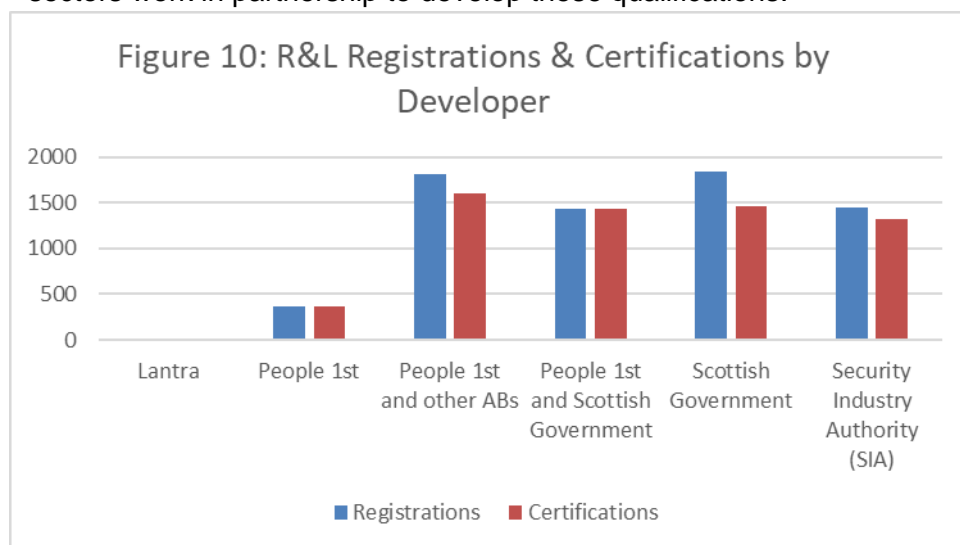
Figure 9: SVQ Registrations & Certifications by Developer

Figure 9 demonstrates that SVQs are favoured across a wide range of developers, compared to Regulatory and Licensing and 'Other' qualifications. SVQs span a variety of sectors, including health and social care, transport, construction and business services. Skills for Care and Development accounts for 34.6% of all SVQ registrations and 33% of all certifications.
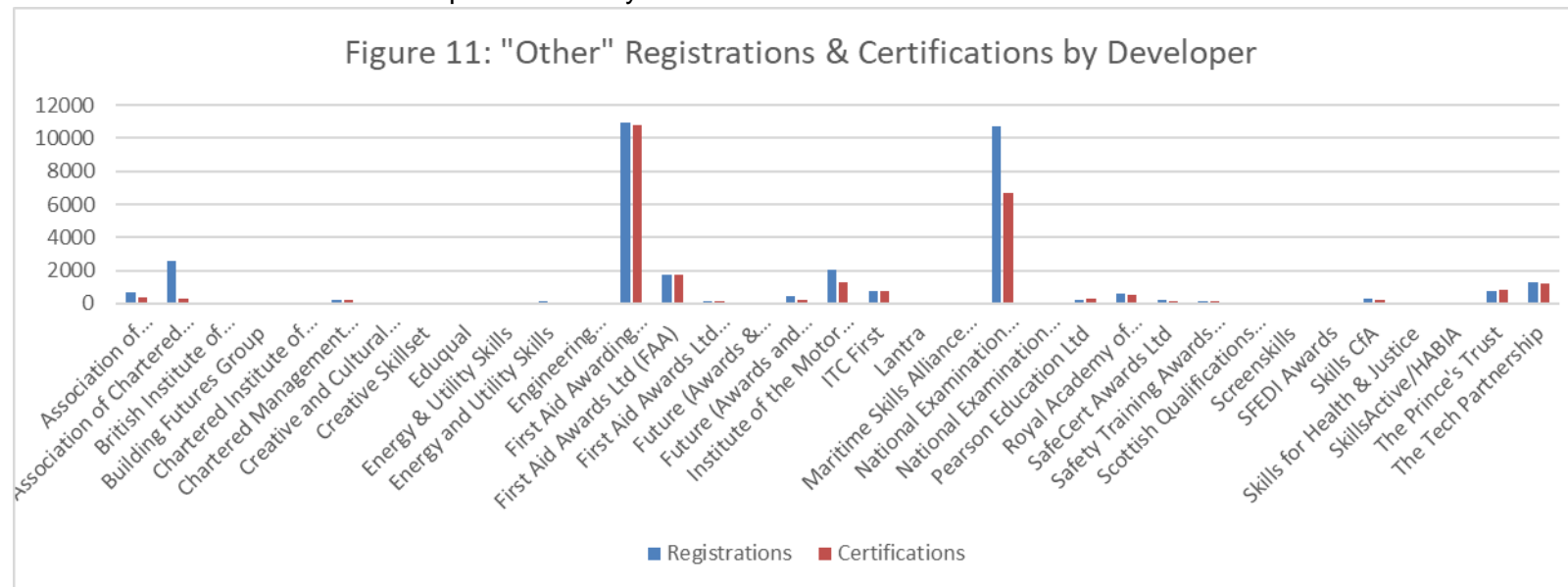
Figure 10 demonstrates that a smaller number of developers create qualifications within the Regulatory and Licensing category. It can be seen from Figure 10 that organisations in these sectors work in partnership to develop these qualifications.

Figure 10: R&L Registrations & Certifications by Developer

The qualifications themselves are relevant to a smaller range of sectors in comparison to SVQs — all registrations for this qualification type are within the security sector.

♦ People 1st and Scottish Government account for 26.7% of registrations and 23.6% of certifications.
♦ People 1st and other awarding bodies account for 26.2% of registrations and 25.9% of certifications.

Figure 11 shows that, while a wide range of qualification developers have created 'Other' qualifications across different industries, the majority of registrations can be attributed to a small number of developers, and hence a small number of sectors. The largest uptake figures are recorded in the First Aid and Occupational Safety and Health sectors.

Figure 11: "Other" Registrations & Certifications by Developer

♦ 31.7% of registrations and 40.8% of certifications are in qualifications developed by the First Aid Awarding Organisation Forum.

♦ 31.1% of registrations and 25.4% of certifications are in qualifications developed by NEBOSH.

2.8 Workplace Core Skills

Workplace Core Skills are the broad, transferable skills that help to develop the main capabilities people need to be full, active and responsible members of society. 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. Each Workplace Core Skill is available at SCQF levels 3 to 6.
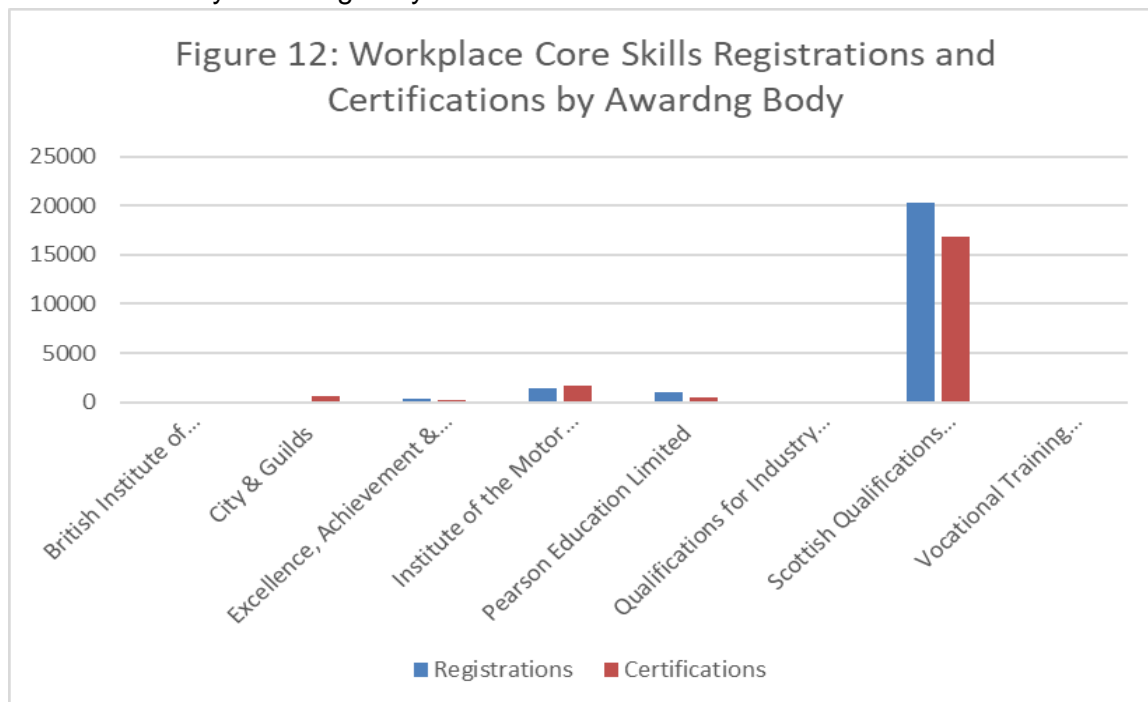
The five Workplace Core Skills are:

♦ Communication
♦ Information and Communication Technology
♦ Numeracy
♦ Problem Solving
♦ Working with Others

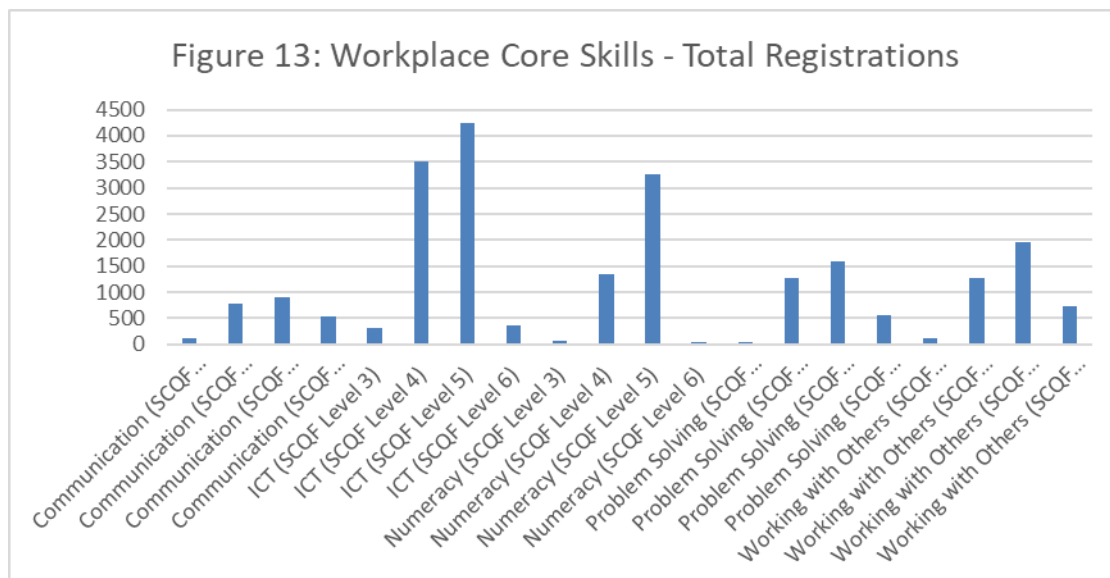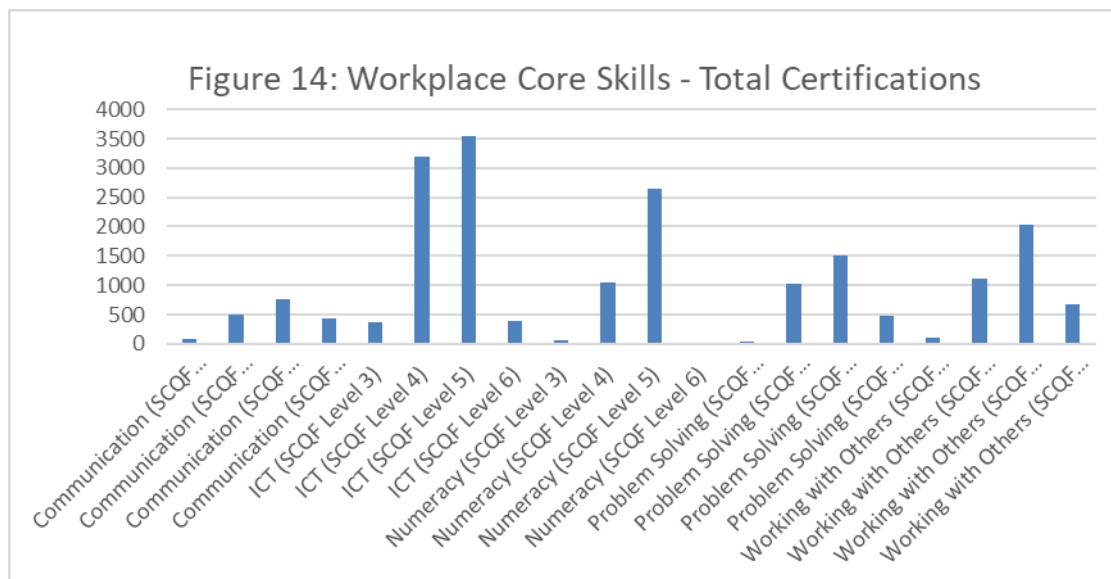At the end of 2020-21:

- **23,037 total registrations**
- Offered by 8 **Awarding Bodies**
- **20,002 total certifications**
- **145 accredited Workplace Core Skills**
- SQA's Information and Communication Technology at SCQF Level 5 had the most registrations: **3,988 registrations**
- SQA's Information and Communication Technology at SCQF Level 5 had the most certifications: **3,137 certifications**

The awarding body with the most registrations and certifications was SQA, with 88.2% of registrations and 84.5% of certifications. Figure 12 shows the number of registrations and certifications by awarding body.

Figure 12: Workplace Core Skills Registrations and Certifications by Awardng Body

The following figures (13-14) show the number of registrations and certifications of each Workplace Core Skill at SCQF levels 3–6:

Figure 13: Workplace Core Skills - Total Registrations

Figure 14: Workplace Core Skills - Total Certifications

The number of registrations and certifications of qualifications and Workplace Core Skills is continually monitored via SQA Accreditation's Quarterly Statistics Reports. These reports are published in the Research and Statistics section of our SQA Accreditation website.

Appendix 1: Glossary of terms

Term	Description
Area of competence	There are 11 occupational areas of competence. These range from Tending Animals, Plants and Land, to Engineering, to Developing and Extending Knowledge and Skill. Areas of competence were replaced by **Qualification Categories** in April 2019.
Certifications	The process by which a centre requests a certificate for a candidate who has completed the full accredited qualification.
'Other' accredited qualification	All 'Other' accredited qualifications that are not SVQs or Regulatory and Licensing qualifications.
Qualification Categories	There are 16 qualification categories, which as of April 2019 replaced the **Areas of Competence.** All qualifications are organised by qualification categories. Examples of categories are Health, social care and childcare, Engineering and Manufacturing and Protective services.
Registrations	The process by which a centre informs an awarding body that a candidate has commenced working towards an accredited qualification.
Regulatory and Licensing qualification	Qualifications which are defined or required by industry regulators, such as the Security Industry Authority, and often underpin licence to practise schemes.
Scottish Vocational Qualification	Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are qualifications which combine skills, knowledge and ability within a specific occupational area and are delivered in a workplace setting. The standards for SVQs are designed by the appropriate sector skills council (SSC).

Appendix 2: Awarding bodies

SQA Accreditation approved awarding bodies.

Abbreviation	Awarding Body
ASQ	Associated Sports Qualifications
AFS	Alcohol Focus Scotland
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
ESB	English Speaking Board
EQL	Equestrian Qualifications GB Limited
EAL	Excellence, Achievement and Learning Limited
FAA	First Aid Awards Limited
Not Applicable	FireQual
FAQ	Future (Awards & Qualifications) Limited
GQA	GQA Qualifications Limited
Not Applicable	Highfield Qualifications
IMI	IMI Awards Limited
IQ	Industry Qualifications 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	PAA/VQ-SET
Not Applicable	PIABC
Not Applicable	Pearson Education Limited
Not Applicable	The Prince's Trust
QFI	Qualifications for Industry
Not Applicable	Rockschool Limited
RAD	Royal Academy of Dance
Not Applicable	RSL
Not Applicable	SafeCert Awards Limited
STA	Safety Training Awards Limited

Not Applicable	
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
Not applicable	Smart Awards
VTCT	Vocational Training Charitable Trust
WCSM	Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers