SQA ACCREDITATION

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR SUBMISSION FORM AC2 (A): QUALIFICATION ACCREDITATION

If you require assistance to complete the form, or require the form in an alternative format , please do not hesitate to contact SQA Accreditation on 0845 213 5249

Your submission and where possible supporting evidence should be sent electronically to accredquals@sqa.org.uk. Once your submission has been received an acknowledgement will be sent indicating the date by which your proposal will be considered. (Please note our customer service timelines are published on our website). In addition an Accreditation Manager will be allocated and will contact you to discuss the submission and obtain clarification if required.

Please ensure that you have completed all relevant sections and documents appended to this submission are clearly identified and referenced.

Please remember that your submission will not be altered in any way by SQA Accreditation staff. It is, therefore, important that you provide as much detailed information as you can and that the information is **specific** to the qualification(s).

GENERAL INFORMATION

- If you are not an approved SQA Awarding Body, then Form AC1 Awarding Body Approval Request **must** be submitted alongside Form AC2(A).
- Form AC2(A) is intended for new or existing Awarding Bodies seeking accreditation of qualifications and/or units. Please note that SQA Accreditation can accredit any qualification other than degrees.
- This form should be completed with reference to the Key Goals in ***SQA's Awarding Body Criteria (2007).***
- Please refer to Section 5: Documentation Checklist within Form AC2(A) for the documents which must be provided.

NOTE

To place X in boxes throughout the form place cursor on selected box and double click. The "Check Box Form Field Options" will appear. Click on 'checked' in 'Default value' and then click 'ok'. An 'X' will now appear in the selected box on the form. Please follow this process wherever boxes are required to be completed throughout the form.

SECTION 1: AWARDING BODY INFORMATION

1.1 Awarding Body contract details

- *Please provide the details requested. If there is a joint partnership arrangement the lead partner's name should appear under this section.*

- *Awarding Body's address (including postcode) – this address will be used for all correspondence relating to this submission.*

- *Awarding Body's Telephone number (including area code) and the full website address should be provided.*

1.2 Awarding Body's representative's contact details

The Awarding Body's representative will be the person to whom all queries relating to this submission will be directed. If there is a joint partnership arrangement in place, the lead partner representative's details should be entered under this section.

1.3 Authorised signatory and date signed

Please scan signature wherever possible and include the date. If this is not possible, please include an e-mail stating that the submission is approved by the Awarding Body's authorised representative. The authorised signatory may not necessarily be the person listed under 1.2.

1.4 Please indicate which model(s) your Awarding Body has selected to embed the Scottish Skills Strategy in the Accreditation process

Please tick the appropriate box in the form. The model chosen by your Awarding Body may have previously been agreed and accepted by SQA Accreditation.

If you are considering Awarding Body approval status, you should discuss this with your Accreditation Manager.

An explanation of the models is provided below:

The Scottish Government published its Skills Strategy: Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy. This strategy included a call to action for a number of partners (including SQA Accreditation) and set out actions which the government asked these partners to take forward. The actions considered to be relevant to SQA's Accreditation function for Awarding Bodies are as follows:

Awarding Bodies need to involve employers in the development of qualifications through more active engagement with relevant Sector Skills Councils and/or Standard Setting Bodies.

SQA Accreditation must have confidence that the Awarding Body has worked with employers and/or SSCs/SSBs in the design and development of qualifications.

In order to satisfy this directive, SQA Accreditation proposed the following models for Awarding Bodies to choose from:

Model 1 - Letter of Support (this is the preferred model for SVQs)

With this approach, an Awarding Body continues to provide letters of support from SSCs/SSBs and/or Scottish employers, confirming that it has involved the relevant SSC/SSB and/or employer in the design of the qualification. The Awarding Body may choose to provide a letter of support only from an SSC/SSB if it is satisfied that the SSC/SSB has brought the voice of employers to the design of the qualification.

Where an Awarding Body can provide evidence of employer involvement in the development of the qualification and evidence of employer demand for the qualification, but is not able to secure a letter of support from the SSC/SSB then the qualification will be considered for accreditation.

Model 2 - Evidence Approach

With this option, an Awarding Body would provide evidence within its accreditation submission that it involved the relevant SSC and employers in the design and development of the qualification. This may take the form of qualification design meeting minutes etc. This option would not require the Awarding Body to provide letters of support from either the SSC and /or employers and will also satisfy the requirement for employer demand for the qualification. This model will then be subject to inclusion within SQA Accreditation's Awarding Body audit process.

Model 3 - Prior Approval Approach

With this option, the Awarding Body will submit its qualification design process for approval to SQA Accreditation. The awarding body will be required to show that this process involved SSCs and employers in the design of the qualification. Once SQA Accreditation has approved the Awarding Body's process and satisfied itself that the Awarding Body will involve SSCs and employers in the design of its qualifications then the Awarding Body will not be required to provide letters of support nor will it have to provide evidence as part of its accreditation submission. As with option 2, this model will be subject to audit to ensure that the process continues to work in practice.

1.1.4 Change to model

Please indicate whether the model selected and notified to SQA Accreditation has changed as a result of this submission. Please provide a rationale for any change in the model.

Please note any changes to the model selected must be approved by SQA Accreditation. In addition, with respect to the selection of Model 3 prior approval of the proposed system is required.

1.5 Partnership Information

This section only needs to be completed if the qualification is to be offered within an existing or new partnership. If there is a partnership, please list the partner organisation(s) along with full name(s) and preferred abbreviations.

Please specify which organisation will take responsibility for the functions outlined. Where a particular function is not appropriate, please indicate this by placing n/a against that function.

If this is a change to an existing partnership arrangement, please provide details of the changes and a copy of the revised joint agreement. If this is a new partnership, please append a draft joint agreement to your submission. A letter of support from the joint partner, in both cases, must be appended to your submission.

SECTION 2: QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

2.1 Title(s) of qualification(s) being submitted

Please provide the titles of all the qualifications contained in this submission ***as it will appear on the candidate's certificate.***

Qualifications must not contain QCF levels.

With respect to SVQs - those SVQs that have not been allocated SCQF level and credit will follow the traditional titling convention ie SVQ level 2 in Customer Service or SVQ Customer Service Level 2, until such time as the SVQ Units are credit rated. However, where an SVQ has been credit rated and levelled, the titling convention is SVQ 2 in Customer Service at SCQF level 5. This convention comes into force from 1 April 2010. However, if an Awarding Body currently offers an SVQ which has been credit rated then it may elect to use this convention earlier than 1 April 2010.

2.2 Has the qualification(s) already been SCQF credit and levelled?

If yes*, please provide the name of the recognised SCQF Credit Rating Body. In addition please specify the SCQF level which has been allocated by that Credit Rating Body.*

If all the Units within the qualification are mandatory please total the number of credits which the candidate will have to complete. If however the qualification consists of a combination of mandatory and optional units, please calculate the lowest and highest number of credits a candidate can achieve by taking the qualification.

Please also indicate the overall SCQF level for the qualification – Awarding Bodies may wish to refer to the guidance on allocating overall level to SVQs which is available on http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/33678.html.

If no*, please indicate whether you intend to submit this qualification for SCQF credit rating?*

SQA Accreditation offers Awarding Bodies that have been approved for one year the opportunity to have their provision SCQF credit and levelled under Delegated Credit Rating. If you would be interested in attaining Delegated Credit Rating status, please speak to your Accreditation Manager.

If you are considering undertaking SCQF credit rating or applying for DCR status, you should discuss this with your Accreditation Manager.

2.3 Market research

You should provide details market research information which identifies that there is a need for the qualification within Scotland.

Your market research may be supplied by the SSC/SSB responsible for the development of the NOS and qualification structures etc. For example, Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) obtained from the SSC/SSB may be supplied as evidence.

If you are submitting a qualification required by a regulatory body then some of your market research may be supplied by the regulatory body.

Supporting evidence must be provided with your submission.

2.4 Progression opportunities

You should provide details of how a candidate may progress from this qualification to other qualifications in related areas and also in other sectors.

Where possible, please identify where this submission and its progression opportunities sit in relation to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

You may also wish to attach a progression diagram which contains this information.

2.5 Proposed start and finish dates

Please insert a preferred implementation date. If you would prefer that the qualification is implemented as soon as possible, please insert 'as soon as possible'. The implementation date will then be set as the date it is approved by ACG. If you would prefer that the qualification is implemented on a particular date, please state this.

Please insert a preferred accreditation lapsing date. Normally a maximum 5 year accreditation will be granted. If you would like a different accreditation period, it would be useful to indicate your preferred date and also indicate the reasons for the selected date. Please note after the lapsing date you will not be able to register any new candidates. However candidates already registered will have the opportunity to complete and be certificated for the qualification providing they do this before the finish date.

Where possible we will use the same lapsing dates for the same/similar qualifications awarded by different Awarding Bodies.

For non SVQs only please insert a preferred finish date. The finish date reflects the date the qualification will expire. SVQs have a predetermined finish date which is set by ACG.

2.6 How do you intend to market the qualifications in Scotland?

You should include details of:

- *how the proposed qualification(s) will be marketed to candidates and, where appropriate, centres in Scotland*
- *support materials and promotional activities which will be used for candidates and, where appropriate, centres in Scotland*
- *resources which will be allocated to effectively implement your marketing activities.*

Please attach samples or draft publications/marketing materials to your submission. Your market research must also indicate potential uptake of the qualification(s) and, where possible, demonstrate demand over time.

2.7 Marketing the qualification and uptake

In all cases you should indicate the potential take up of the qualification(s). Clear evidence of long term demand in Scotland for each proposed qualification within this submission. Your market research could assist with this information.

2.8 Type of qualification(s)

Please check the box for the appropriate qualification.

If you are submitting more than one type of qualification please complete a separate form for each type.

Please also indicate if there is an intention to include the qualifications within a Scottish Modern Apprenticeship.

SECTION 3: QUALIFICATION DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

This section should be completed for SVQs only.

3.1 Please provide further information on the qualification(s) included in this submission.

3.1.1 Please identify the SSC/SSB responsible for the NOS development.

Please provide the name of the Sector Skills Council or Standard Setting Body with overall responsibility of the National Occupational Standards.

3.1.2 When were the NOS approved?

Please provide the date when the NOS were approved and version number.

3.1.3 When was the qualification structure(s) approved?

Please provide the date when the qualification structure(s) was approved by SQA Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG). You must include a copy of the final approved qualification structure with your submission. The approved version should contain a footer that states 'final version approved .....' – the final version will be available from the SSC/SSB.

3.1.4 When was the Assessment Strategy approved?

Please provide the date when the Assessment Strategy was approved by ACG. You must include a copy of the final approved Assessment Strategy with your submission. The approved version should contain a footer that states 'final version approved .....' – the final version will be available from the SSC/SSB.

3.1.5 When was the Core Skills Signposting approved?

Please attach a copy of the Core Skills Signposting to your submission. Please provide the date when the Core Skills Signposting was approved by ACG.

Please ensure that the Core Skills Signposting is the final approved version. The final approved version should contain a footer that states 'final version approved .....' – the final version will be available from the SSC/SSB.

3.2 How will you meet the requirements of the Assessment Strategy in respect of External Quality Control?

You should provide a detailed explanation on how your Awarding Body will meet the Assessment Strategy requirements. What type of External Quality Control does the SSC/SSB require within its Assessment Strategy – for example, has the SSC/SSB stated that independent assessment is in the form of a multiple choice question bank? Are there other forms of External Quality Control indicated which might include, for example, risk analysis, a sampling strategy or enhanced external verification?

Having identified, the type of External Quality Control, you must indicate how your Awarding Body will carry this out. For example, if the type of External Quality Control is risk analysis, information including the following should be given:

- *the system used for identifying and maintaining a centre's risk rating*
- *the procedure for alerting External Verifiers of a centre's risk*
- *the remediation process for centres which require additional monitoring*
- *the procedure for gathering information on risk rating*

3.3 How will you meet the requirements of the Assessment Strategy in respect of the Realistic Working Environment (RWE)?

You should indicate how your Awarding Body will ensure that the requirements for Workplace Evidence are met – for example, through monitoring by external verifiers.

3.4 How will you meet the requirements of the Assessment Strategy in respect of Simulated Working Conditions?

What are the Awarding Body systems and processes to ensure that the requirements of the assessment strategy are adhered to?

3.5 How will you meet the requirements of the Assessment Strategy with respect to the occupational expertise of personnel involved in the delivery and quality assurance of the qualification(s)?

Please indicate how you will ensure that the Assessors, Internal Verifiers and External Verifiers meet the occupational competence requirements of the assessment strategy. This must include details of how this information is recorded and how you will monitor their continued compliance with these requirements, particularly in respect to Continuous Professional Development and qualifications.

3.6 Please indicate where in your Assessment Guidance or Centre Guidance the relevant information can be found.

You should insert the document titles and page numbers as appropriate.

SECTION 4*:* QUALIFICATION DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

This section should only be completed for <u>qualifications other than SVQs</u>

4.1 Sector representatives

You should provide information on the personnel representing your sector for the qualification area in this submission.

4.2 Target audience and qualification type

Please provide details of the target audience for your qualification for example, targeted at Scottish Modern Apprentices, entry into FE/HE. Please also indicate how this particular qualification type will meet the needs of the Scottish market, for example why you have chosen to develop an alternative competence based qualification rather than a SVQ.

4.3 Requirements placed on the qualification by the SSC/SSB, Sector or Regulatory Body

You should provide full details of any requirements that have been placed on the qualification(s) by any of the above bodies. In some cases the regulatory body may have developed the specification. In this case please provide details of how you ensure the qualification developed meets the regulatory body specification.

4.4 Please provide details of how your Awarding Body has designed an assessment methodology that is fit for purpose and ensures the quality and consistency of assessment is provided at any location

You should attach a copy your assessment methodology to your submission or clearly indicate where it can be found in your assessment guidance. Your assessment methodology must be supported by the SSC/SSB.

4.5 Please identify the personnel involved in the delivery and quality assurance of the qualification(s). Please provide a summary of their roles and responsibilities and any relevant qualifications and experience required.

The personnel involved in the delivery and quality assurance of SVQs consists of Assessors, Internal Verifiers and External Verifiers. It may be that you operate the same system of quality assurance for this qualification and therefore use the same personnel carrying out the same or similar roles.

You may also operate an alternative system of quality assurance which involves different personnel with different roles and functions. If so, please list the personnel involved, and provide a brief overview of their roles and any experience, occupational competence or qualifications required.

4.6 Please provide details of your systems and procedures for monitoring the quality and consistency of assessment provided at any location for the qualification(s).

The quality assurance procedures for SVQs take the form of external verification activity, however for other types of qualifications there may be alternative methods of ensuring the quality and consistency of assessment. Please provide details of your systems and procedures.

SECTION 5: DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

5.1 Checklist: The following documents must be supplied with your submission

*The documents listed in this section must be provided with your submission. They can be attached to the submission with a reference number, eg Appendix 1, Appendix 2 etc, or if they are contained within other documents already provided you may signpost these other documents and provide the appropriate reference number***.** *It is important that you include updated information which is relevant to the qualification(s). If there are documents which have already been sent to SQA Accreditation, then this should be indicated, detailing the appropriate reference number(s).*