SQA Accreditation: Delegated Credit Rating (DCR)

About Delegated Credit Rating

Delegated Credit Rating (DCR) has been developed in line with the Scottish Government's Skills Strategy. It aims to ensure that individuals receive appropriate credit for the learning they have received, and to provide routes into other learning opportunities.

SQA Accreditation has developed a non-bureaucratic, no-cost process for credit rating which allows you to demonstrate your commitment to the Skills Strategy.

Why should you apply for DCR status?

DCR status will give your awarding body the opportunity to recommend an SCQF credit rating and level for the SQA-accredited qualifications in your portfolio.

SQA Accreditation will remain the SCQF Credit Rating Body, and will confirm your credit rating decision before the qualification is included in the SCQF.

The only qualifications DCR does not apply to are SVQs. This is because SQA has a statutory responsibility for SVQs.

The benefits of DCR

DCR is a cost-effective method of ensuring that your qualifications are recognised on the SCQF. There are no set-up costs, or on-going costs, associated with DCR.

DCR status will demonstrate your awarding body's commitment to populating the SCQF, and your support of the Scottish Government's Skills Strategy (*Skills for Scotland: A Lifelong Skills Strategy*).

When SQA Accreditation confirms a qualification's SCQF credit rating, you and your customers will have these added benefits:

♦ It will be a regulated qualification that is also SCQF credit rated.
♦ The relationship between your qualifications and those of other awarding bodies can be clearly compared on the SCQF.
♦ The entry and exit routes for progression of your candidates will be clarified.
♦ The opportunities for credit transfer for your candidates will be maximised.
♦ Candidates will be able to plan their progress and learning.
♦ Candidates will be able to benefit from Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

In cases where an SSC is proposing an alternative competence-based qualification to an SVQ in the mandatory section of a Scottish Modern Apprenticeship, these qualifications need to be accredited by SQA and credit rated for the SCQF. DCR status will give you the advantage of having your qualification ready for inclusion in the Modern Apprenticeship.

Your DCR status will include SQA Accreditation quality assurance of your SCQF credit rating and levelling processes and systems. You will be able to emphasise this in your promotional material, to demonstrate the quality of your processes and systems.

You will get access to SQA Accreditation's expert team, who can advise and guide you through the process of becoming a DCR body and provide support, even after you receive DCR status.

There will be synergy across all SQA Accreditation audit activity — our Regulation Section will ensure that there is not an additional audit burden on any awarding body with DCR status.

Once your SCQF credit rating recommendations have been approved by SQA Accreditation, we will inform the SCQF Partnership.

How does my awarding body apply for DCR status?

SQA Accreditation and Regulation Managers will be happy to talk you through the process of applying for DCR status. All guidance documentation, criteria and application forms are on the SQA Accreditation webpage: http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/104.87.html.

To be considered for DCR status, your awarding body must be able to demonstrate that:

- ♦ You have been an SQA Approved AB for a minimum of one year.
- ♦ You have received at least one full audit from SQA Accreditation.
- ♦ Your awarding body is awarding SQA-accredited qualifications.
- ♦ Your awarding body personnel have previous experience of credit rating for a qualification framework (but this does not specifically have to be experience of SCQF credit rating).

These are the key criteria for DCR status.

There are other requirements that your awarding body will need to meet. These are listed in the *SQA Accreditation Delegated Credit Rating, Criteria and Guidance for Awarding Bodies.*

What does SQA Accreditation expect of awarding bodies who have DCR status?

Once you have DCR status, we will require you to:

- ♦ Notify us of all qualifications and units that have been SCQF credit rated, and provide a clear audit trail.
- ♦ Provide us with an annual report which evaluates your SCQF credit rating activity.
- ♦ Provide SQA Accreditation with access to all SCQF credit rating documentation, systems and processes during audit activity.
- ♦ Work in partnership with us to provide as much notice as possible of any future SCQF credit rating that your awarding body will be carrying out under DCR status.

More information

If you would like more information about DCR, please see the SQA Accreditation webpage http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/104.87.html or e-mail your enquiry to us at accredquals@sqa.org.uk.