

Connecting with **SQA**

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find out more...



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# Who **we are**



Scotland's education system is world-renowned — and the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) sits at its very heart. Increasingly, we're the awarding body of choice — businesses, colleges, schools and training providers turn to us for the qualifications and services we provide because they respect our experience and trust our track record.

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As Scotland's national body for qualifications, SQA accredits, assesses and awards all stages of qualifications up to degree level, except those granted by professional bodies. It's a role that we've held for more than a century and which sees us report directly to the Scottish Government.

Working closely with schools, colleges, universities, employers, training providers and government, we devise and develop qualifications and assessments relevant to today's increasingly competitive global marketplace. SQA is tasked with creating the new national qualifications to support the Curriculum for Excellence — something we're ideally placed to do, given our dominant position in supplying

qualifications to schools. Our skills and innovation in qualification design are also highly sought after by industry, and we supply our products and services to all sectors of Scotland's economy.

A first-rate quality assurance scheme supports all that we do and helps us continue to grow our name worldwide. SQA is active throughout the UK and beyond, giving educational institutions, businesses and other organisations across the globe access to the same expertise that you can enjoy right here in Scotland. Every business or organisation that engages with us gets its own dedicated account manager — someone you can get to know by name, and who'll know you.

SQA also does its bit for the wider community. We've published our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy on our website, where you can also read annual reviews of our CSR activities. We list these under four headings: Community, Customer, Environment, and Workplace. We pride ourselves on providing a happy and friendly place to work — not least because it's good for business. Awards we've won recently include the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award, the Cycle Friendly Employer Award, the Glasgow Local Community Award, the Glasgow Business Award for Happiest, Healthiest Workplace, and the Carbon Trust Graduate Scheme Award.



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# Our work **across Scotland**



Studying for an SQA qualification is an experience that almost every person in Scotland could tell you about.

Nearly all Scottish secondary school pupils achieve a selection of SQA qualifications, with many going on to obtain further qualifications at college. More and more people are also taking our qualifications in the workplace, where SQA is equipped to assess employees at every level from junior to professional.

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You probably know us from our work with vocational qualifications, eg Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), Modern Apprenticeships or Professional Development Awards. But partnering with SQA isn't just about using our vocational qualifications.

Let us administer your organisation's own qualifications for you. Enhance their credibility by having them credit rated by SQA for inclusion in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Or lend weight to other in-house initiatives by asking us to endorse what you offer — whether it's training programmes, portfolios, learning materials or other aspects of training and certification.

SQA offers targeted, sector specific qualifications, and we can also design bespoke awards to meet more specialised organisations' specific needs. Our Customised Awards can help you to formalise in-house training, increase skills levels and meet regulatory requirements. What's more, our independent stamp of approval will increase customer confidence in staff competence.

Building relations with SQA has allowed the business to explore all avenues open to staff for encouraging continuous learning and development. The service we have received to date has been excellent, with all information given in a timely and professional manner. BDL Hotels look forward to continuing to build on the relations and service gained to date.

**MARTIN MACPHAIL**  
Regional HR Manager  
The Landmark Dundee/BDL Hotels



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# Our **markets**



Individuals, institutions and industry all trust in SQA to deliver high quality qualifications that aid progress and improve productivity.

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Across Scotland, individuals of all ages and at all stages invest in SQA qualifications. School pupils and further education students; people already in work and those looking for a way into employment; trainees and apprentices; managers and professionals. When it comes to carving out a career, an SQA qualification can open the door to initial opportunities and help to maintain momentum.

Much of the time, it is educational institutions that deliver SQA qualifications. To make sure that our name continues to be respected at home and abroad, SQA insists on quality assuring and approving every organisation wanting to offer our qualifications. Where needed, we offer help to meet our standards. Currently, centres in 10 countries use our qualifications — and every one of them has passed our stringent quality assurance tests.

This means everyone who uses our qualifications — learners, students, employers — can trust them as valid and worthwhile. The benefits to our centres of offering trustworthy, respected qualifications are enormous.

Sibbald Limited, one of the country's largest private training providers in the construction sector, find working with SQA is a very easy and seamless process. The electronic candidate registration certification systems are very user friendly and easy to work with, and one of the most important areas we like is that all our External Verifiers are experts in the qualification areas they verify in.

**JOHN MCMILLAN**  
Training Manager, Sibbald Ltd

If you deliver our qualifications, you can use SQA's prestige as a marketing tool. You'll benefit from our personal, professional support systems, with a real person providing you with help and advice, and you can rest assured that our qualifications are underpinned by the very best quality assurance.

Businesses who use SQA qualifications get the advantage of well-trained staff with world-class qualifications — they're good at what they do, and you can say so. Because SQA qualifications are recognised across the world, wherever you do business, your customers will know that your staff won't let them down.

Because our qualifications are so flexible and inclusive, and cover such a vast range of skills and knowledge, businesses and organisations from every sphere take advantage of our expertise. From accounting to agriculture, and manufacturing to mathematics, our qualifications cover all bases. We also provide qualifications for learners whose first language is not English.



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# Our **qualifications**



A brief glance at our wide variety of qualifications is all that's needed to see that SQA offers something for everyone in Scotland.

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SQA is perhaps best known in Scotland for our Standard Grades, Highers and Intermediate National Courses. But we offer much more besides these qualifications to give candidates clear pathways towards further learning, employment or career progression.

We design National Certificates to increase the employability of young people and adults in full-time education by giving them basic skills in a chosen vocational area. Our Higher National Certificates and Higher National Diplomas are well established and recognised. They aim to deliver the skills and knowledge

college students need to meet the demands of today's businesses. Our work-based SVQs recognise competence in the workplace, and we help employers to support the continuing professional development of staff through our Professional Development Awards — short, flexible and rigorously quality assured courses for people in established careers.

All SQA qualifications are made up of Units. Units can be built up into Courses and Group Awards. It's a straightforward, flexible and highly accessible system that lets candidates progress at their preferred pace.

Good qualifications are more important today than they have ever been. Our qualifications genuinely capture and reflect our candidates' skills and provide for them a pathway to the workplace or further study.

**DR JANET BROWN**  
Chief Executive of SQA  
and Scotland's Chief  
Examining Officer



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# Our **support**



SQA's behind-the-scenes work helps to ensure that every qualification is delivered with care, attention and a guarantee of quality.

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The value of any qualification depends on this guarantee. That's why SQA devotes so much time and effort to maintaining the high standards our qualifications are based on. As well as monitoring assessment decisions and testing standards, we analyse achievement levels to make sure that, from year to year, the awards we make have the same value.

We continually review our products and services to make sure that our qualifications remain relevant

to today's market. Online assessment is a growing area for our school and college qualifications. We also provide online training, including a massive resource for centre staff called SQA Academy. We support candidates and providers alike with apps, online support, e-portfolios and social software for project work. Many of our qualifications can be assessed electronically. Our website has support materials for centres offering our qualifications, and results are delivered online.

Every individual who achieves an SQA qualification receives a Scottish Qualifications Certificate — we issue more than 360,000 certificates annually. We recognise our top candidates and others who've performed outstandingly or have shown extraordinary commitment at our annual Star Awards ceremony. And to help individuals and organisations keep track of progress through our awards, all SQA qualifications are included in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.

SQA has demonstrated a commitment to ensure the skills and training products it offers will give learners the best opportunity to succeed in a highly competitive and demanding industry.

**JAMES BROWN**  
Head of Renewables  
Energy and Utility Skills



# Contact **us now**

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Our products and services can help your candidates to progress and your organisation to prosper. What's more, we're entirely flexible — you decide what qualifications support you need and SQA will do the rest.

When you get in touch with us, you'll have a named account manager who's backed up by a support team. If you're interested in a specific sector or subject area, you'll also be able to speak to people who have specialist knowledge of the field.

What you've read here is just a taster. Contact SQA today to find

out more about what we can do for you — our team is on hand to answer your queries and provide more in-depth advice. Call us now — we can speak on the phone, or we can arrange a time to come and meet you. We're happy to help in whatever way suits you best.



Business Development Team

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