SQA Accreditation Definitions		
Within the context of SQA Accreditation:		
SQA Accreditation		A distinct, autonomous regulatory arm of SQA, separate from SQA Awarding Body.
Term	**Acronym**	**Definition**
Accountable Officer		The responsible individual nominated by the awarding body to deal with SQA Accreditation.
Accreditation		The process by which SQA Accreditation decides if an SQA-approved awarding body satisfies the Regulatory Principles and Accreditation Criteria necessary to successfully award and certificate a given unit or qualification.
Accreditation Committee	AC	A committee of people external to SQA Accreditation which meets quarterly to direct and monitor the work of SQA Accreditation
Accreditation Co-ordination Group	ACG	An internal committee which meets weekly to discuss and decide on matters relating to the approval and regulation of awarding bodies and the qualifications which they offer.
Accreditation period		Every qualification is accredited for a finite accreditation period. For example, for an SVQ this is usually between three and five years. At the end of the accreditation period, qualifications can be re-accredited, extended, withdrawn, or deleted. Within the accreditation period a qualification or unit can be amended.
Accreditation submission		The documentation and supporting evidence which an SQA-approved awarding body submits to SQA Accreditation in order to get its qualification(s) and/or unit(s) accredited.
Approval		The process by which SQA Accreditation decides if the criteria governing the quality of any of the following activities or products have been successfully met. SQA Accreditation approves: awarding bodies, qualification products, SCQF credit rating for SQA-accredited qualifications
Assessment methodology		The approach to assessment of a qualification, eg observation, oral questioning, examination or a combination of such methods.
Assessment principles		Requirements and recommendations specified by an SSO/regulatory body/awarding body in relation to the assessment and quality assurance of units and qualifications.
Assessment strategy		Requirements and recommendations specified by an SSO in relation to the assessment and external quality control of one or more SVQs. These are specific to, and mandatory for, SVQs but may also be used with other types of qualifications.
Audit		A form of quality assurance used by SQA Accreditation to regulate its approved awarding bodies.
Awarding body	AB	An organisation which issues certificates for qualifications to formally recognise the achievements of an individual and which quality assures the delivery and assessment of those qualifications. In this context, is specifically an organisation recognised by SQA Accreditation for the purpose of awarding SQA-accredited qualifications.
Awarding organisation	AO	Term used outside Scotland for an awarding body.
Awards Processing System	APS	The database used by SQA to record all data related to qualifications. APS code for qualifications is known as the '4+2', ie

		four digits plus a further two digits. The last two digits provide information regarding the level of a qualification. For example, xxxx 23 = SVQ 3.
Area of competence	AoC	There are 11 occupational areas of competence within the SVQ framework. SVQs are categorised by the area of competence to which they belong, eg engineering; providing goods and services.
Candidate		An individual who has been entered for a given unit or qualification by a provider recognised to deliver that qualification by an SQA-approved awarding body.
Conflict of interest		A situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests and loyalties.
Certification		a) The process by which a provider asks an awarding body for a certificate for a candidate who has successfully completed a given qualification or unit.
		b) In relation to statistical information it refers to the number of certificates which has been issued for given qualifications.
Competence-based qualification	CBQ	A NOS-derived qualification which is unit-based, flexible and which has been developed to support individuals in achieving occupational competence. An SVQ is a specific type of CBQ.
Compliance		The act of complying with the Regulatory Principles specified by SQA Accreditation for its approved awarding bodies.
Condition		Imposed by ACG when required criteria have not been met by ABs in relation to awarding body approval, and/or accreditation and by SSCs in relation to approval of qualification products and/or SCQF credit-rating.
Continual improvement		An ongoing process through which an awarding body increases its effectiveness and/or efficiency to fulfil its policies and objectives.
Core Skills mapping		Core Skills mapping shows where the assessment evidence generated for the units within a qualification will also be evidence of achievement of workplace Core Skills. Mapping is required for Modern Apprenticeship Frameworks.
Core Skills signposting		Core Skills signposting indicates where the assessment evidence generated for the units within a qualification might also contribute to the evidence needed for someone to achieve one or more workplace Core Skills units. Note: signposting does not guarantee that the evidence will be enough to certificate all or any of the workplace Core Skills.
Credit rating		The process by which the SCQF level and SCQF credit points are allocated to given units and qualifications.
End (also finish or expiry) date		Accredited qualifications have an end date. Certificates cannot be issued after this date.
Entry (registration)		The process by which an approved provider informs its awarding body that a candidate has begun working towards a given unit or qualification.
Expired qualifications		Qualifications which have gone beyond their certification end date (finish date).
Extension		The process by which a qualification at the end of its accreditation period is extended for a further period.
Imported units		Units used in a qualification which are not owned by the SSC which is otherwise responsible for the development and maintenance of that qualification and its component products — eg a management

		unit within a retail qualification.
Incremental review		A review of NOS and/or related existing qualification(s) which may result in minor to moderate but not extensive or fundamental changes.
Issue		Applied when an awarding body has failed to act in accordance with, or meet the standards of, the specific set of criteria governing the roles and responsibilities of SQA-approved awarding bodies.
Labour Market Information	LMI	Statistical information gathered about the labour market which is then used for labour market-related planning and decision-making.
Lapsing, lapsing date, lapsing period		A qualification is accredited for a finite period. This is known as the accreditation period. The accreditation period has a start date, a lapsing date and an end (or finish) date. The qualification is live between the start date and the lapsing date. Candidates can be entered on the qualification and new providers can be approved until the lapsing date. The lapsing period is the period between the lapsing date and the end (or finish) date. Certificates cannot be issued after the end date. This means that any candidates who are entered on the qualification must be entered before the lapsing date and must have successfully completed it by the end date. Some qualifications have pre-set lapsing periods, eg 2 years for an SVQ 2.
Learner		Candidate, student, individual undertaking a SQA accredited qualification.
Maladministration		Any actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises the accreditation of quality assurance process including the integrity of accredited qualifications, the validity of any certificates, or the reputation and credibility of SQA Accreditation.
Malpractice		Any deliberate actions, neglect, default or any other practice that compromises the accreditation or quality assurance process including the integrity of accredited qualifications, the validity of any certificates or the reputation and credibility of SQA Accreditation.
Modern Apprenticeship	MA	A programme based on an SVQ or a competence-based qualification, Core Skills units and possibly other relevant qualifications which allows people to be trained in a job whilst also achieving nationally-recognised vocational qualifications.
Modern Apprenticeship Framework	MAF	A document which details the content and structure of a given MA.
Modern Apprenticeship Group	MAG	An independent group of relevant key stakeholders which works with and reports to the Scottish Government regarding all MAs, including approving the frameworks.
National Occupational Standards	NOS	National Occupational Standards describe what a person needs to do, know and understand to do a job competently.
Provider		Organisation or individual responsible for delivery and/or assessment of an SQA accredited qualification. A provider may constitute a centre, tutor, examiner or assessment location.
Provider monitoring visit	CMV	A visit to a given awarding body's approved provider used as a form of quality assurance by SQA Accreditation to regulate its approved awarding bodies.

Qualifications and Credit Framework	QCF	The mandatory Qualifications and Credit Framework used to describe qualifications and learning programmes in terms of their level of difficulty and credit (size), effective from 2010 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
Quality Enhancement Rating	QER	A quality assurance model by which SQA Accreditation determines the level of audit activity needed for an approved awarding body within a three year cycle.
Qualification products	QPs	Some or all of the following items which make up the approved qualification 'package': structure, units, assessment strategy or assessment principles, Core Skills signposting.
Re-accreditation		The process by which a qualification at the end of its accreditation period is replaced with a revised and updated version of the original qualification.
Reasonable adjustments		Arrangements which are approved in advance of an examination or assessment process to allow achievement to be demonstrated by the candidates with either a permanent or long-term disability or learning difficulty, or a temporary disability, illness or disposition.
Regulation		The process by which SQA Accreditation regulates its approved awarding bodies and their activities using a range of quality assurance methods and techniques.
Regulatory Principle Directives		Specific published criteria that awarding bodies must adhere to.
Regulatory requirements		Regulatory principles, Regulatory Principles Directives and the clauses within legal arrangements with SQA Accreditation.
Relevant legislation		Any law, legislation or standards which has an impact on the awarding body's operating environment.
Sanction		A punitive measure applied to an awarding body which has failed to resolve an issue or meet the terms of a condition imposed upon it.
Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework	SCQF	The framework used to describe Scottish qualifications and learning programmes in terms of their level of difficulty and size.
Scottish Vocational Qualification	SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualifications are work-based qualifications based on standards of competence (National Occupational Standards).
Sector Skills Council	SSC	Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are state-licensed, employer-led organisations which cover specific economic sectors and which have specific aims relating to skills, training and related standards and qualifications.
Self-Assessment		A method used by approved awarding bodies to assess their own ability to meet the requirements of the regulatory principles.
Special considerations		A post assessment adjustment to a learner's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, temporary injury or any other indisposition at the time of assessment.
Standard setting organisations	SSO	This is a term used to describe a body or organisation which has authority from UKCES to define national occupational standards. These could be SSCs or other sector bodies.
Supplementary information		Information provided to assist awarding bodies in meeting the Regulatory Principles.

Third parties and service providers		Any person(s) or organisation(s) that has arrangements or agreements in place which contribute to awarding body activities.
UK Commission for Employment and Skills	UKCES	This is the organisation that manages public funding for the development and review of national occupational standards, qualifications products for Scotland and UK apprenticeships.
Validation		The process used by SQA Awarding Body to decide if the content, design and rationale for a qualification or unit within its own National and Higher National portfolio meets the required standards for SQA Awarding Body to award and certificate that qualification or unit.
Withdrawal		The process by which a qualification at the end of its accreditation period which has not been extended or re-accredited is removed as an available qualification.
Workplace Core Skills		These are the broad, transferable, generic, fundamental skills needed for people in employment and in the workplace: communication; numeracy; information and communication technology (ICT); problem solving; working with others