Guidance to submitting organisations on Form AC1

Awarding body approval application and initial qualification submission

Prior to completing Form AC1 — Self-appraisal

In order to become an SQA approved awarding body, organisations are required to demonstrate that they are capable of meeting the range of SQA Accreditation regulatory requirements.

SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles (2014)

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42393.2736.html

SQA Accreditation strongly recommends that any organisation considering applying for awarding body approval and qualification accreditation undertakes a process of self-appraisal to establish if it is currently in a position to make a viable application. The *Guidance for Prospective Awarding Bodies* provides details of the key requirements that should be considered when undertaking self-appraisal.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/48712.html

If a prospective awarding body is confident that it can meet the above requirements, then initial contact should be made with SQA Accreditation.

Firstly, a copy of the Enquiry Form should be completed and submitted to regulation@sqa.org.uk. Once this form has been submitted, you will be contacted within five working days to discuss your organisation, proposed qualification(s) and the awarding body approval application process. Should you have any difficulty in sending the completed Enquiry Form to the Regulation mailbox, please contact the **Accreditation Officer** on **0345 213 5249**.

The awarding body approval application and initial qualification submission Form AC1

Form AC1 must be used by submitting organisations when applying to become an approved awarding body by SQA Accreditation. Any SO should contact SQA Accreditation prior to the submission of any documentation or completed AC1. SOs are also required to submit one qualification for accreditation at the same time as applying for approval. Should an SO wish to submit more than one qualification with their approval application, this must be agreed in advance with their appointed Accreditation Manager.

Completing the AC1

The AC1 is split into sections, with each section requiring appropriate information and evidence to demonstrate how your organisation meets the requirements to become an approved awarding body.

SOs must also detail the documents supplied as evidence under each Principle to support their application. Electronic copies of these documents must be submitted as evidence and sent together with the AC1.

Submitting organisations are advised to refer to the guidance contained within the following documents when completing the AC1:

♦ *Guidance to Submitting Organisations on Form AC1*
♦ *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2014)*
♦ *Regulatory Principles Directives*

Submitting organisation's information

SOs must complete all sections.

Please ensure that partnership submissions are clearly stated. It is strongly advised that an SOs initial submission should be for their own qualification and not a partnership arrangement.

Regulatory Principles and quality assurance submission

The information requested throughout this section relates directly to Principles 1–15 contained within *SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles (2014)*.

For each Principle you will be required to demonstrate how your policies, procedures and systems meet the requirements of that principle and submit documentary evidence to support this. Principles 9 and 10 will also ask you how those policies, procedures and systems relate to the qualification submission associated with this application.

Some of your documentation may be used as evidence to cover more than one Principle; in this case the documentation should be referenced and listed under each Principle to which it refers.

SQA Accreditation will confirm if the documentation provided contains sufficient information to meet the requirements of the Principle(s).

Qualification submission for accreditation

Title of qualification being submitted

Please insert the full title of the qualification as it will appear on the candidate's certificate.

With respect to qualifications that have been credit rated for the SCQF, where appropriate, the title should include the SCQF level. (eg SVQ 2 Customer Service SCQF level 5 — see *Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR 4* for further guidance).

Qualification developed by

Please provide the name of the organisation that developed the qualification.

For SVQ/SVQ Units — this will be the name of the sector skills council (SSC).

Qualification type

Please indicate the type of qualification being submitted for accreditation.

- SVQ/SVQ Unit
- Regulatory Qualification
- Other Qualification (may include stand-alone Units)

Proposed accreditation period

Normally, a maximum five-year accreditation period will be granted. If your organisation would like a different accreditation period, please indicate the length of the accreditation period and the reason for selection.

However, please note that the date may be selected by Accreditation Committee Group (ACG) to align with other qualification accreditation periods. SQA Accreditation will inform the submitting organisation of the accreditation period agreed. The accreditation start date will be the date of the ACG meeting.

We will also set an end-certification date, which is the last date when certificates can be issued for the qualification. Please give an indication of the end-certification date required, taking into account the length of time it takes an average candidate to complete the qualification and to be certificated.

Unit specifications

Please ensure that all Units being submitted for accreditation are listed and provide a copy of the Unit specifications.

For SVQ/SVQ Units — Please provide a copy of the approved National Occupational Standards (NOS) indicating when the NOS were approved. The final versions of the NOS will be available from the SSC/SSB or the NOS Directory — www.nos.ukces.org.uk

Additional requirements

For SVQ/SVQ Units — this will include Assessment Strategy and Core Skills signposting.

Please provide a copy of the approved version of the Assessment Strategy ensuring that it clearly indicates the date it was approved by ACG. The approved version will be available from the SSC.

Please also provide a copy of the approved version of the Core Skills signposting, ensuring that it clearly indicates the date when it was approved by ACG. The approved version will be available from the SSC.

You should provide details of how you will meet the requirements specified in the Assessment Strategy and also obtain a letter of support from the SSC.

For Regulatory Qualifications, this may include specific requirements as defined by the regulatory body, for example this may be a set of Assessment Principles or a Training Standard.

Please attach any relevant documentation and details of how you will meet these additional requirements.

Where appropriate, please also provide details of support from the regulatory body.

For Other Qualifications, this may include specific assessment or quality assurance requirements.

Please attach any relevant documentation and provide details of how you will meet any additional requirements which have been set.

Qualification structure

If the qualification structure has been prior approved by ACG please ensure that the correct version is used and provide the date of approval.

Please complete the qualification template (AC1B) providing details of the units and/or pathway being submitted for accreditation and clearly showing the structure of the qualification (eg the total number of units and the mandatory and optional units required to achieve the qualification). If units have been SCQF credit rated and levelled, please also provide this information.

SCQF credit rating

If the qualification/units have been SCQF credit rated then please provide the date the SCQF credit rating was approved by ACG. Please include the SCQF level and credit information on the qualification template.

For SVQ/SVQ Units, this information can be obtained from the SSC.

If the credit rating was carried out by another SCQF credit rating body (not SQA Accreditation) then please provide the date of approval and the name of the CRB in the section below.

SCQF credit rating body

If the credit rating was approved by ACG then the SCQF credit rating body will be SQA.

If the credit rating was carried out by another CRB then please provide the name of the CRB.

If the qualification is not SCQF credit rated, is there an intention to do so?

If you would like to submit the qualification for SCQF credit rating then please discuss this with the Accreditation Manager.

Documents submitted as evidence

In addition to the documentation provided in support of Regulatory Principles 9 and 10, please also provide evidence which specifically relates to the qualification being submitted for accreditation.

Poor quality or accuracy of information submitted may affect the timescales in which a decision can be made.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What happens once the AC1 has been submitted?

The AC1 will be scrutinised by the appointed Regulation Manager and Accreditation Manager. Accreditation staff will liaise with the SO to ask for any additional information they feel is needed to support the application and once both are satisfied that the submission contains all the relevant information, the organisation will be advised of a date when the application will be submitted to the Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG).

Poor quality or accuracy of information submitted may affect the timescales in which a decision can be made.

It is an ACG decision whether an awarding body application for approval and qualification accreditation is granted. The application will be approved, approved with conditions or deferred by ACG. Any conditions applied to the awarding body approval or qualification submission will be subject to an action by date that the awarding body must meet. Deferred applications will be given feedback to enable the organisation to re-submit at a later date.

Additional Qualifications for Accreditation — AC2 Form

After approval status has been granted, the awarding body must make any further qualification accreditation submissions using the AC2 Form. This form is available to download from the SQA Accreditation website and a guidance document is also available.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42272.2719.html

Awarding body Quickr places for banking documents

Following approval, the awarding body will be given access to their own Quickr place.

This is a secure online system that allows approved awarding bodies to bank documents with SQA Accreditation. Awarding bodies must ensure they keep their banked documents up to date as they are used to ensure ongoing compliance with *SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles (2014)*. Further instructions on the setup and use of Quickr will be sent following awarding body approval.