

# SQA Accreditation

## Removal of Approved Awarding Body Status Policy

<b>Policy</b>	<p>Once an awarding body has been approved by SQA Accreditation, in order to maintain that status it must meet the conditions listed below. Should any approved awarding body fail to meet any of these <b>conditions</b> the Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG) will review the information available and make a decision on whether approved status can continue:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Meet any conditions assigned with respect to awarding body approval or qualification accreditation.</b></li><li><b>2. Comply with SQA Accreditation's <i>Regulatory Principles</i>, Regulatory Principles Directives, the requirements of the clauses within and any conditions attached to the Accreditation Licence.</b></li><li><b>3. Ensure that the necessary actions are carried out to mitigate the risks associated with any issues identified through the quality assurance processes.</b></li><li><b>4. Ensure that the necessary actions are carried out to facilitate the removal of any sanction(s) imposed (in cases where regulatory compliance has not been continuously met).</b></li><li><b>5. Maintain accredited qualifications including having an active candidate base</b></li></ol> <p>To be read in conjunction with: <a href="#">Sanctions Policy</a> <a href="#">Zero Uptake Policy</a></p>
---------------	---

<p><b>Why do we need this policy?</b></p>	<p>SQA Accreditation imposes conditions on Awarding Bodies in order to gain approved status. If an awarding body fails to comply through not taking appropriate, timely action to resolve issues identified through Awarding Body audit, monitoring activity or compliance investigations and to meet conditions attached to accredited qualifications at the point of approval, then this policy will be invoked.</p>
<p><b>How does the policy apply and to whom/what does it apply?</b></p>	<p>This policy applies to SQA approved awarding bodies.</p>

# Guidelines on implementing SQA Accreditation's Removal of Approved Awarding Body Status Policy

## 1 Policy

This policy has been approved by SQA's Accreditation Committee (AC).

The Accreditation Committee is authorised by the Scottish Government to delegate authority to the Accreditation Coordination Group (ACG).

SQA Accreditation provides regular updates to the ACG Members.

The final sanction which can be imposed by SQA Accreditation on awarding bodies is:

Category 3 Sanction – removal of Approved Awarding Body status.

## 2 Process

When an application is made for qualification accreditation and an awarding body is identified as having not met all SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements then either:

- ◆ the qualification will be accredited subject to the Awarding Body fulfilling specified condition(s) within an agreed timescale; or
- ◆ the Awarding Body will not be accredited in relation to that qualification.

If it is established during SQA Accreditation regulatory or quality assurance processes that an Awarding Body is not meeting SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements, details of the requirements not being met will be recorded and the awarding body will be required to produce an action plan designed to ensure the requirements are met within an appropriate timeframe.

Awarding bodies are required to meet conditions attached to accredited qualifications and to complete action plans within an agreed timeframe and it is the responsibility of each awarding body to track and monitor progress against conditions or action plans raised on their own systems. SQA Accreditation will monitor whether approved awarding bodies are implementing the changes necessary to satisfy conditions or meet regulatory requirements.

SQA Accreditation will ensure that all reasonable avenues of communication with the awarding body have been exhausted in an attempt to ensure all conditions and regulatory requirements are met before resorting to the removal of awarding body status. However, when the awarding body does not ultimately take the required action(s) within the agreed timescales, the ACG may apply this Policy.

Where the ACG has decided that the imposition of a sanction is no longer appropriate, then the awarding body will be notified within five working days of the ACG decision date.

Sanctions will normally be applied sequentially until the awarding body complies with the condition(s) of accreditation or regulatory requirements. When this has not resulted in the awarding body meeting SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements then this Policy will be applied.

If the ACG considers that:

- There are no mitigating circumstances which provide an acceptable explanation of why regulatory requirements have not been met within an agreed timescale (Conditions 1-4); and/or
- The awarding body has either: no currently accredited qualifications, and it is perceived that there is no prospect of the awarding body applying for the accreditation of any further qualifications which may generate candidate activity; or has accredited qualifications with no candidate activity, and it is perceived that there is no prospect of the awarding body achieving any further candidate activity; (Condition 5);

then the awarding body's approved status may be removed (the final decision on whether an awarding body's approved status should be removed rests with the Accreditation Committee (AC)).

### **3 Details**

For details of the range of sanctions which may be applied to awarding bodies in cases where regulatory compliance has not been maintained, please refer to both:

[SQA Accreditation Sanctions Policy](#)

[SQA Accreditation Zero Uptake Policy](#)

## 4 Appeals

All awarding bodies will have the right to appeal **any** decision made by the ACG. Grounds for appeal will vary depending on individual situations, therefore, all appeals made will be considered in their own right. Full details of the [Process for Appeals and complaints](#) can be found on the SQA Accreditation section of the SQA website.

Policy Owner	Head of Accreditation
Policy Author	Senior Regulation Manager
Category (if known)	Accreditation
Document Version No. eg 1.1	3
Revisions Approved by	Accreditation Committee, June 2014
Date Revisions Approved	Accreditation Committee, June 2014
Review Date	30 June 2016
Is/should this be on SQA's website	Yes – SQA Accreditation webpage