Systems and Qualification Approval: Guidance for Centres

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We are committed to using plain language. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve, let us know at writing@qualifications.gov.scot.

Change log

Version	Location of change and description of changes	Revision date
4.2	Terminology changed from SQA to Qualifications Scotland throughout the document (with the exceptions of the previous references to SQA in the change log below), and some web addresses and document titles which will remain valid until the next update is due.	April 2026
4.2	Part B: Your qualification approval: Completing the form sections 1-5 4. Qualifications and units Change to requirement: **two** of the six units provided must be from the subject area of group award.	February 2026
4.1	Significant updates to styling and formatting throughout document to ensure accessibility. Inclusion of a title page. Updates to styling of Change log.	October 2025
4.0	**Criterion 6.2, 6.3, 6.4.** Updated criterion headings. **Criterion 4.7** Updated the first hyperlink **Additional Support** subheading to the most recent document version.	August 2025

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Introduction

Who is this guide for?

This guide describes how to become a Qualifications Scotland centre and how to obtain approval to offer Qualifications Scotland qualifications. It will help all potential new centres as well as Qualifications Scotland's existing centres. These include:

- colleges, schools and training providers
- private and public sector organisations
- international training providers and organisations

What does this guide cover?

Part A: Systems approval focuses on what a Qualifications Scotland centre requires for its core systems.

Part B: Qualification approval covers qualification approval procedures and practice.

Both parts relate to the following Qualifications Scotland qualifications:

- Qualifications Scotland Advanced Certificates and Diplomas
- Higher National Certificates and Diplomas (HNC / HND)
- National Qualifications (other than new National Qualifications)
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)
- Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) units
- Customised Awards (CA)
- Professional Development Awards (PDA)

How to use this guide

You should use this guide in conjunction with the Systems and Qualification Approval Application Forms. It explains the evidence that you will need to provide to meet Qualifications Scotland's quality assurance criteria.

The approval process

The Qualifications Scotland approval process involves two types of approval:

Systems approval: this confirms that your centre has the management and quality assurance systems that you will need to support the delivery, assessment and internal verification of Qualifications Scotland qualifications. It doesn't matter which qualifications you intend to offer. This area will be reviewed by a **Qualifications Scotland systems approver**.

Qualification approval: this confirms that your centre has the staff, reference materials, learning materials, assessment materials, equipment and accommodation needed to deliver, assess and internally verify the qualifications listed on your application. This area will be reviewed by a **Qualifications Scotland qualifications approver**.

To offer your first qualification, you must apply for systems approval and qualification approval (for at least one qualification) at the same time.

Note: Depending on the qualifications you are seeking to offer, more than one approver might review your application or be involved in the approval activity

You become a Qualifications Scotland approved centre once both systems and qualification approval have been granted. You will then be given a Qualifications Scotland centre number and guidance on how to enter candidates.

How we can help you with your application

You can find information on the approval process and Qualifications Scotland's quality assurance criteria on Qualifications Scotland's website.

The website also has information about the full range of Qualifications Scotland qualifications.

If your centre is based in the UK: call our Business Development and Customer Support team on 0303 333 0330 or email mycentre@qualifications.gov.scot.

If you are an international centre: call our Regional Managers on +44 (0) 141 282 6500 or complete the contact form: International Contact Form.

What happens after my centre is approved?

After you have gained systems approval, you only need to seek qualification approval when you want to offer **additional qualifications**. You can apply for approval to offer additional qualifications at any time.

Once you are an approved centre, you must demonstrate that your centre continues to meet Qualifications Scotland's quality assurance criteria as you deliver and assess your qualifications. We routinely monitor all our approved centres to ensure that they have the necessary management and quality assurance systems in place, and that they meet the assessment and internal verification requirements for the qualifications being offered. This is known as **verification**. You can find more information about this on our quality assurance web pages.

We will also monitor your progress in entering candidates. If you do not enter candidates within eight months of obtaining centre approval, we may contact you to discuss additional support options. **We reserve the right to withdraw centre approval if no candidates have been entered for any of our qualifications within one year of centre approval.**

Part A: Your systems approval application

If you are already an approved Qualifications Scotland centre, you do not need to send us a systems approval application. Instead, go straight to Part B.

If you are not yet an approved centre, you'll need to complete a systems approval application.

Completing the form: sections 1-7: About your centre

1 Centre contact details

Provide the main postal address of your centre. This address should match the records held at Companies House (if applicable). We will use it as your primary contact address once your centre has been approved.

2 Key contact points

Please provide details for the contacts who will undertake these specified roles in your centre:

- Head of centre
- Finance contact
- Co-ordinator for Qualifications Scotland

Note that these roles could be carried out by the same person.

3 Additional centre information

Indicate whether you agree Qualifications Scotland can provide your centre information to candidates who ask us to help them find centres that offer particular qualifications.

4 Current approval status

Provide details of any other awarding bodies who have approved you to offer their qualifications.

5 Quality assurance standards

Provide details of any quality assurance standards that your centre uses (for example ISO 9001). This will help us to understand your approach to quality assurance.

6 Prior approval refusals, withdrawals, or sanctions imposed

If another awarding body has refused or withdrawn approval from your centre, or if you have had sanctions imposed, give the details in this section. Failure to disclose this information may have an impact on the processing of your approval application.

7 Previous experience in assessing qualifications or training

Provide an overview of your centre’s experience in assessing qualifications or training.

Completing the form: section 8: Your centre's systems, policies and procedures

In this section you need to provide evidence to demonstrate your centre's understanding of and compliance with Qualifications Scotland's quality assurance criteria. The tables in the application form direct you to provide attachments to support your application for each criterion.

Category	**Systems approval criteria**
1: Management of a centre	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10
2: Resources	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5
3: Candidate support	3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6
4: Internal assessment and verification	4.1, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8
5: External assessment	5.1, 5.2, 5.3
6: Data management	6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4

At the approval stage, you are expected to confirm your intended systems and how they will enable you to meet Qualifications Scotland's quality assurance criteria. Evidence of implementation will be considered through subsequent systems verification visits, after approval.

Notes on using this guide to develop your systems, policies and procedures

Here you will find information on the best ways to use and understand each of the sections under each of the systems approval criterion.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Under each criterion we tell you what specific documents you should provide with your application.

To be approved, your systems must clearly meet the quality criterion. You may use different terminology to the terms used in our guidance.

You must provide evidence which reflects the actual or intended practice in your centre.

The quality assurance criterion is displayed in bold.

Why is this criterion important?

This section explains how the criterion ensures high standards in Qualifications Scotland approved centres and maintains the integrity of Qualifications Scotland qualifications.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

This section gives details of the specific requirements that Qualifications Scotland, as the awarding body, sets out for this criterion. It will not be included if all the relevant information is included in the wording of the criterion itself.

Information in this section **must** be written into your policy or procedure.

These requirements apply to **all** qualification types:

- National Units
- National Courses
- Awards
- National Progression Awards (NPAs) and National Certificates (NCs)
- Higher National Certificates (HNCs) and Diplomas (HNDs)
- Professional Development Awards (PDAs)
- Advanced Certificates and Diplomas
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)
- National Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)
- Customised Awards

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications (where applicable)

This section gives details of any specific additional requirements for qualifications which are externally regulated by Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, under the Qualifications Scotland Accreditation Principles, or by Ofqual or Qualification Wales under their General Conditions of Regulation. This includes:

Qualifications Scotland Accreditation

- Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)
- Regulatory and Licensing qualifications which are required for some regulated job roles (eg First Aid at Work, security industry qualifications, licensed trade qualifications)
- Other qualifications which are in the mandatory section of a Scottish Apprenticeship framework (eg competence qualifications, knowledge qualifications, Workplace Core Skills)

Ofqual and Qualifications Wales

- NVQs, Awards, Certificates and Diplomas for specific occupational sectors
- Assessor and verifier qualifications

You can check if the qualifications for which you are applying for approval are subject to regulation by visiting the relevant website: Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, Ofqual, or Qualifications Wales.

If you are applying for approval to offer a regulated qualification, the information in this section **must** be written into your policy or procedure.

If you do not intend to offer regulated qualifications, you must not include these requirements in your policy or procedure.

Additional requirements for National Courses with external assessment (where applicable)

This section gives details of any specific additional requirements for National Courses which have external assessment in the form of Qualifications Scotland examinations and externally assessed coursework in some cases. These are:

- National 5 courses
- Highers
- Advanced Highers

If you are applying for approval to offer National Courses, the information in this section **must** be written into your policy or procedure.

If you do not intend to offer National Courses, you must not include these requirements in your policy or procedure.

Additional support

Some sections also provide web links to other Qualifications Scotland guidance that will support you to develop suitable evidence.

Systems approval criteria: Category 1: Management of a centre

We need to ensure that you manage quality assurance effectively and that processes which support Qualifications Scotland qualifications are documented, implemented, reviewed and continuously improved. Please ensure you send a copy of the relevant documents with your completed application.

Criterion 1.1 Policies and procedures must be documented and reviewed to ensure full compliance with Qualifications Scotland quality criteria

What evidence do I need to provide?

- You must provide:
- A contents list of your quality assurance system / manual which details all Qualifications Scotland related policies and procedures
- A schedule for the review of policies and procedures and a template to record changes made as a result of review
- Version control information noted on each document and / or a version control table
- Roles and responsibilities for document management

Why is this criterion important?

Compliance with this criterion ensures that there is an effective system for the management of quality assurance in your centre.

The system must be documented so that it can be audited and evaluated against Qualifications Scotland requirements, both by your staff and by Qualifications Scotland's systems verifiers.

Your quality documentation (such as policies, procedures, and recording documentation) must be regularly reviewed to ensure that it reflects current practice, is up to date, and is fit for purpose.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

- You must document your quality system.
- You must record and action the outcomes of reviews of your documented processes.
- You must have a system of version control for documentation.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Document storage: Policies, procedures and supporting documentation for the assessment of Qualifications Scotland qualifications may be held electronically or in hard copy. These must be made available to all staff and candidates involved in Qualifications Scotland programmes. Staff, in particular, must be fully aware of the policies and procedures operating within your centre.

If you are also working with other awarding bodies, there will be some policies and procedures which are common. In these cases, you may refer to 'awarding bodies', rather than 'Qualifications Scotland' where the requirements are the same. If there are specific Qualifications Scotland requirements which are different from other awarding bodies relating to a policy or procedure, you must state this. This should be done, for example, in an appendix to the main document, and in induction materials for staff and candidates delivering or undertaking Qualifications Scotland qualifications.

Quality management system: You must have a documented schedule for reviewing your quality management system on an ongoing basis and demonstrate how you will record and action reviews and ensure that all staff are made aware of any changes made.

Roles and responsibilities: You must also make clear who is responsible for reviewing, updating, controlling and disseminating these documents in your roles and responsibilities.

Version control: Version control can be evidenced by recording version numbers and dates of the last review on your documents (eg as a footer on every page). Or, where there are legal or regulatory reasons for having a clear audit trail of changes – for example, key policy documents – it may also be appropriate to use a version control table to keep track of what changes are made, when and by whom.

Criterion 1.2: Policies and procedures must be endorsed by senior management and disseminated to all relevant staff

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- Signature of senior manager included on master documents or a statement from your chief executive or a foreword in your quality manual from senior management.
- A statement or procedure in your quality manual which describes how documents will be disseminated to staff.

Why is this criterion important?

Senior management endorsement of policies and procedures gives a clear message to all staff and candidates that your centre is committed to quality assurance.

Staff must be made aware of the policies and procedures operating in your centre, and of their responsibilities to act in accordance with them.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

The senior management of your centre must lead on or endorse all policies. They may devolve authority for the development of policy and procedure documents. You can record senior management endorsement in the version control information on the documents, or in a separate statement which confirms their support.

You must ensure that policies and procedures are communicated to staff and that you have procedures in place to ensure they are kept up to-date with any changes.

Criterion 1.3: Qualifications Scotland must be notified of any changes which may affect the centre's ability to meet the quality assurance criteria

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- Role and responsibilities of the co-ordinator for Qualifications Scotland or head of centre and / or a procedure that lists the changes to be reported in full.

Why is this criterion important?

This information must be documented in full, so staff are aware of this requirement, particularly if they are new to a role.

Qualifications Scotland must hold accurate and current information on approved centres. Most communications from Qualifications Scotland will be sent to the co-ordinator, so it is essential their name and contact details are current.

Providing this information allows Qualifications Scotland to minimise possible risks and to provide centres with additional support if required.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must document notification responsibilities in your roles and / or in a procedure, confirming who will notify Qualifications Scotland of any changes.

You must show clearly that any of the following specific changes will be reported to Qualifications Scotland:

- change of premises
- change of head of centre, owner, or co-ordinator
- change of name of centre or business
- change of contact details
- outcome of internal or external investigations
- removal of centre or qualification approval by another awarding body
- lack of enough appropriate assessors or internal verifiers (IVs) to deliver the qualifications you have candidates entered for
- any concerns of centre malpractice, once the centre has carried out an initial screening exercise to establish the nature of the concern. This includes any concerns where the centre has judged that no further action is necessary (see also criterion 1.5)
- any findings of centre malpractice or maladministration communicated to you by another awarding or industry body
- any breach of security of assessments published by Qualifications Scotland on its secure site (see criterion 4.5)
- change to your centre's arrangements for secure storage of Qualifications Scotland examination papers and candidate evidence (where relevant)

Additional requirements for qualifications regulated by Ofqual

You must document how you will inform Qualifications Scotland on Connect of any changes to individual assessors and internal verifiers involved in the delivery of internally assessed qualifications regulated by Ofqual.

Additional requirements for National Courses with external assessment:

You must document how you will inform Qualifications Scotland of any changes to your centre's arrangements for secure storage of Qualifications Scotland examination papers and candidate evidence.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Identify who has this responsibility and document in writing the circumstances when they must notify Qualifications Scotland. This will ensure that if staff in your centre change role this essential information will be passed to Qualifications Scotland.

Only centres delivering Ofqual regulated qualifications must notify Qualifications Scotland immediately of changes to assessor or internal verifiers. However, all centres must notify Qualifications Scotland if you do not have enough appropriate assessors or IVs to deliver the qualifications you have candidates entered for.

Criterion 1.4: The roles and responsibilities of those involved in the administration, management, assessment and quality assurance of Qualifications Scotland qualifications across all sites must be clearly documented and disseminated

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- Qualifications Scotland-specific roles and responsibilities for:
  - co-ordinator for Qualifications Scotland
  - data managers
  - assessors
  - internal verifiers
- Person specification / job descriptions (if Qualifications Scotland responsibilities are included)
- Example contract, partnership agreements or memorandum of understanding

Why is this criterion important?

This is to ensure that all staff in your centre are fully aware of their own role and responsibilities, as well as those of others involved in providing Qualifications Scotland qualifications. This includes anyone sub-contracted or working in partnership with your centre.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must document and disseminate, to relevant staff, the roles and responsibilities of those involved in:

- the management of Qualifications Scotland qualifications
- the administration of Qualifications Scotland qualifications

- the assessment and quality assurance of Qualifications Scotland qualifications
- sub-contracted services or partnership arrangements

Additional requirements for centres delivering National Courses with external assessment

You must document the roles and responsibilities for staff managing external assessment – both Qualifications Scotland examinations and externally-assessed coursework (where applicable). This may include visiting assessment by Qualifications Scotland for performance assessments.

All information on managing external assessment is in the document: *Delivering National Qualifications: Guide for Qualifications Scotland Co-ordinators* on Connect.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Roles and responsibilities may be shown in job descriptions, specific role descriptions, or in procedural documents, but they must be sufficiently detailed.

The management of Qualifications Scotland qualifications: In Systems Approval and Verification: Support Materials we provide exemplar roles. We have grouped all responsibilities for managing Qualifications Scotland qualifications under the role of co-ordinator. This may not suit your centre – the responsibilities may be split between different members of staff, but you must show clearly how all the responsibilities are covered.

The administration of Qualifications Scotland qualifications: If your centre has dedicated administration staff, for example for candidate enrolment or data management, you must also document their roles and responsibilities. If administration is undertaken by the co-ordinator, or another member of staff, these responsibilities can be recorded in their role.

The assessment and quality assurance of Qualifications Scotland qualifications: You must have documented roles and responsibilities for assessors and internal verifiers.

Sub-contracted services or partnership arrangements: If you wish to work in partnership with another organisation or sub-contract services of an individual to assess or quality assure Qualifications Scotland qualifications, you must provide evidence of the contract, partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding you will use which clearly identifies the responsibilities of all parties.

In Systems Approval and Verification: support materials we provide guidance on what to include in sub-contractor agreements.

Additional support

- Example roles and responsibilities can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.
- Guidance on the use of alternative assessment sites and remote assessment can be found on our website.

Criterion 1.5: Suspected candidate or staff malpractice must be investigated and acted upon, in line with Qualifications Scotland requirements

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A malpractice policy and procedure which uses the Qualifications Scotland definition, and which covers centre and candidate malpractice

or

- Separate polices for candidate malpractice and centre (staff) malpractice

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Guidance for candidates on avoiding plagiarism
- A template 'declaration of authenticity' to be signed by candidates

Why is this criterion important?

We are committed to safeguarding the quality and credibility of our qualifications. Even where you are taking good steps to prevent malpractice, concerns can still arise and so it is important you have a detailed, documented procedure in place to allow all allegations to be investigated consistently, fairly and impartially.

When a malpractice concern is reported to Qualifications Scotland, our approach will be fair, robust and proportionate to the nature of the concern. We may investigate it ourselves, ask you to investigate it and report your conclusions to us, or ask to review your handling of the situation.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

Your policies and procedures for malpractice must cover both malpractice by candidates and malpractice by centre staff. Qualifications Scotland's expectations are described in Malpractice: Information for centres.

You must use the following definition:

> *Malpractice means any act, default or practice (whether deliberate or resulting from neglect or default) which is a breach of Qualifications Scotland requirements including any act, default or practice which:*
>
> - *compromises, attempts to compromise, or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any Qualifications Scotland qualification, or the validity of a result or certificate;*
>
> *and / or*
>
> - *damages the authority, reputation or credibility of Qualifications Scotland or any officer, employee or agent of Qualifications Scotland*

Malpractice can arise for a variety of reasons:

- Some incidents are intentional and aim to give an unfair advantage or disadvantage in an examination or assessment (deliberate non-compliance).
- Some incidents arise due to ignorance of Qualifications Scotland requirements, or carelessness or neglect in applying the requirements (maladministration).

It is necessary to investigate any suspected instances of malpractice, whether they are intentional or not, to protect the integrity of the qualification and to identify any wider lessons to be learned.

You must describe:

- how suspected malpractice can be reported
- who will undertake investigations and how these may be managed
- how the outcome of an investigation will be communicated
- the types of measures which may be applied to candidates or staff if malpractice is proven
- what actions you may take to prevent further occurrences
- how candidates or staff can appeal a malpractice decision (internally and to Qualifications Scotland)
- what records will be kept and for how long

Any suspected cases of centre malpractice must be reported to Qualifications Scotland as soon as you have carried out an initial screening exercise to establish the nature of the concern. This includes any concerns where you take the view that no further action is necessary.

You must co-operate with any Qualifications Scotland investigation and implement actions as determined by Qualifications Scotland, subject to successful appeal.

You must inform us of any investigation carried out by an awarding body, industry body, funding agency or regulator which may or may not affect the delivery of Qualifications Scotland qualifications.

You must also promptly bring to our attention any findings of centre malpractice or maladministration communicated to you by another awarding or industry body. You must notify us promptly if another awarding body removes approval from your centre, regardless of the reason given for this withdrawal. This will allow us to assess any risk to Qualifications Scotland qualifications you offer.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

For qualifications subject to statutory regulation by Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales, you are required to report any suspected cases of candidate malpractice to Qualifications Scotland. This requirement must be written into your procedures.

Qualifications Scotland will need to share information with the relevant regulator, and if the regulator decides to get involved directly, you and Qualifications Scotland will need to co-operate. There are additional rights of appeal for candidates for regulated qualifications, and you must let candidates know about them.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Refer to the specific guidance on writing malpractice procedures in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials. Ensure that you consider the size and set up of your centre when you describe how suspected malpractice will be investigated and acted upon.

All staff and candidates must understand your malpractice procedures. Consider the type of candidates you will work with and ensure that your procedure is accessible and easy to understand.

Your documented procedure must be made available to all staff involved in the delivery and assessment of Qualifications Scotland qualifications and included as part of your centre staff

induction process. This should also be discussed during staff development activities, including standardisation meetings.

As part of candidate induction, you must outline possible malpractice, such as plagiarism, collusion, copying, disruptive behaviour during an assessment etc.

Any concerns of possible staff or candidate malpractice must be investigated as described in Qualifications Scotland's Standards for Devolved Investigations. Records of malpractice must be maintained in line with the timescales set out in criterion 4.7 and made available to Qualifications Scotland on request.

Artificial intelligence

Qualifications Scotland's current position is that learners cannot submit AI outputs as their own work. This constitutes plagiarism, one of the forms of candidate malpractice. You can find the most up to-date advice from Qualifications Scotland here: Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in assessments.

Additional support

Guidance on writing malpractice procedures can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: Support Materials:

- Systems Approval and Verification: support materials
- Candidate disclaimer for SVQ Portfolio
- Reporting malpractice concerns
- Malpractice: Information for centres
- Malpractice policy and procedures for Qualification Scotland qualifications regulated by Ofqual and / or Qualification Wales
- The Appeals Process: Information for Centres
- Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in assessments

Criterion 1.6: No-one with a personal interest in the outcome of an assessment is to be involved in the assessment process. This includes assessors, internal verifiers (IVs) and invigilators

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A policy and / or procedure for dealing with conflict of interest in assessment

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Information (such as in staff handbook, or induction checklist) that any interest must be declared, and to whom

Why is this criterion important?

Having a personal interest in the outcome of an assessment amounts to a conflict of interest, which poses a risk to the integrity of assessment. You must take steps to mitigate against this risk.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Refer to the specific guidance on writing conflict of interest in assessment procedures in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

Assessors, IVs and invigilators must be informed at induction of the requirement on them to declare any personal interest.

You must provide a mechanism for making such a declaration (eg informing their line manager in writing or completing a form and submitting it to the co-ordinator).

Staff are required to make a declaration if they are related to or have a private relationship, or have a close professional or business relationship with a candidate, and are currently deployed to:

- set assessments which this candidate will undertake
- make assessment judgements on this candidate's evidence
- internally verify assessment decisions on this candidate's work
- invigilate an assessment which this candidate is sitting

A close professional or business relationship could include being the line manager of a candidate or being line-managed by the candidate.

Staff are also required to make a declaration if they are related to or have a private relationship with another member of centre staff involved in the internal verification of assessments. For example, where the assessment decisions of an assessor are to be internally verified by a relative.

Conflict of interest also applies where an individual stands to make a personal financial gain from the outcome of the assessment, as opposed to payment to the centre through normal business practices.

You must retain copies of documentation, including details of the action taken to mitigate against the conflict of interest for one year after completion of the qualification in question.

Additional requirement for Customised Awards where candidates undertake their assessment in languages other than English

Where a customised unit or qualification has been assessed in a language other than English, the centre is responsible for ensuring that materials submitted to Qualifications Scotland for remote verification activities are translated into English. The centre is responsible for identifying an appropriate independent third-party translator to translate from the required language. Any potential conflicts of interest must be identified and addressed as described above.

Additional support

Guidance on writing conflict of interest in assessment procedures can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

Criterion 1.7: There must be an effective process for communicating with staff, candidates and Qualifications Scotland

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A procedure which describes how you will manage communication with staff and candidates and Qualifications Scotland

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Documented roles and responsibilities (eg co-ordinator, IVs, line managers)

Why is this criterion important?

This is to ensure that all staff are fully aware of Qualifications Scotland's current requirements. This could be information on specific qualifications, or about administrative procedures, or wider policy or qualification development issues. Qualifications Scotland will only send this information directly to the co-ordinator, so you must have an effective internal process for communicating information to relevant staff.

It is important that you can demonstrate that you will have effective systems for communicating with Qualifications Scotland and candidates in order to keep everyone fully informed.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You must state in your roles and responsibilities, who has responsibility for communicating with Qualifications Scotland and for distribution of information from Qualifications Scotland to staff and candidates.

Managers may have responsibility for disseminating information to their staff.

Individual members of staff can also keep themselves up to date using the Qualifications Scotland website and the My Alerts service.

Other staff, such as assessors or tutors, may have specific responsibility for passing on information to candidates, and receiving information from them.

You may be asked to, or wish to, provide feedback on certain issues to Qualifications Scotland (eg comments on qualifications, feedback on examination papers) and your roles and responsibilities can also cover this.

Additional support

Please sign up for our MyAlerts - Qualifications Scotland service.

Criterion 1.8: Feedback from candidates and staff must be sought and used to inform centre improvement plans

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A procedure which describes how you will gather feedback from candidates and use this to inform improvements

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Example feedback forms

Why is this criterion important?

You must ensure that staff and candidates are given the opportunity to provide feedback on your systems and the Qualifications Scotland qualifications that candidates undertake. This feedback should be reviewed so that your systems and programmes are improved for future participants.

Feedback must be used to:

- assist with monitoring the operation of your systems
- ensure that you continue to comply with Qualifications Scotland criteria
- inform continuous improvement

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You must develop procedures and mechanisms to encourage, capture and review feedback from your candidates, and from your assessment team.

You must keep evidence of action being taken as a result of feedback (where appropriate).

Criterion 1.9: The centre must comply with requests for access to records, information, candidates, staff and premises for the purpose of external quality assurance activities

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A documented role of the co-ordinator with responsibilities for managing Qualifications Scotland external quality assurance activity

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Procedure for managing external quality assurance

Why is this criterion important?

To make an objective assessment of your compliance with Qualifications Scotland quality assurance criteria, our representatives must have access to the relevant people and documentation.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You should include in documented procedures that you will comply with requests for access from Qualifications Scotland staff or appointees for quality assurance purposes, within the required timescales stated by Qualifications Scotland.

If you do not comply with a request to carry out systems verification, this criterion outcome will be set to Red, which could result in sanctions being placed on your centre.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

Centres offering regulated qualifications must also allow access to Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales staff.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Qualifications Scotland will make all requests for access to your co-ordinator. The documented role and responsibilities of your co-ordinator must include the management of Qualifications Scotland external quality assurance. This includes responding to requests from Qualifications Scotland within the required timescales. If you plan to deliver regulated qualifications, it also includes facilitating access to your centre for staff from the appropriate regulatory body.

You may also include procedures for the preparation and management of external verification visits in other documents, for example, the role of the IV, or in your assessment and verification procedures.

Criterion 1.10: Outcomes of external quality assurance must be disseminated to appropriate staff and any action points addressed within agreed timescales

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A documented role of the co-ordinator with responsibilities for communicating outcomes of external quality assurance activity and ensuring required actions are met within agreed timescales.

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Procedure for managing external quality assurance

Why is this criterion important?

The results of Qualifications Scotland external quality assurance activity must be made known to all relevant centre staff, to encourage positive aspects and good practice, and to make staff aware of any required actions or recommendations. Staff must be clear about their roles in addressing action points, and any agreed timescales.

If Qualifications Scotland systems or qualification verification results in required actions, an agreed timescale will be set for addressing these. Sanctions may be applied if you do not fully

meet the action points within this timescale. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, which must be notified to Qualifications Scotland as soon as they are known.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

All requirements are included within the wording of this criterion.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You must develop an effective process to share Qualifications Scotland quality assurance reports with staff who are involved with Qualifications Scotland qualifications.

Quality assurance reports will always be sent to your co-ordinator. The documented role of your co-ordinator must include the responsibility to communicate the outcomes of external quality assurance activity to appropriate staff.

The documented role of your co-ordinator (or other role within your centre responsible for quality assurance) must include the responsibility to ensure that any required actions are met within the agreed timescale.

Circumstances may, exceptionally, arise that make it difficult to fully meet the required action within the agreed timescale. You should submit any requests for extensions at the earliest opportunity and before the agreed action date.

Systems approval criteria: Category 2: Resources

Your procedures for managing resources must be documented, implemented and monitored to meet Qualifications Scotland requirements. Please ensure you send a copy of the relevant documents with your completed application.

Criterion 2.1: Assessors and internal verifiers must be competent to assess and internally verify, in line with the requirements of the qualification

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- recruitment, selection policy, criteria or job adverts for assessor and verifiers
- job descriptions or person specification for assessor verifiers
- procedures for assessor or verifier training and development, and continuing professional development (CPD)

Note: In systems approval, the focus is on policies and procedures for recruitment, selection and deployment of staff as assessors and IVs. Checks on the qualifications and occupational competence of your staff will be undertaken during qualification approval.

Why is this criterion important?

To ensure the validity and integrity of the qualifications offered by Qualifications Scotland, it is important that assessors and IVs have the appropriate qualifications and occupational competence for qualifications they are assessing and / or verifying.

Your awareness of these requirements and the processes you have in place for addressing them will be checked during your application.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

Assessors and IVs must have the occupational experience and understanding, and any necessary qualifications specified in the Qualifications Scotland requirements for the qualification.

The requirements can be found in the published guidance for each qualification, such as the assessment strategy, unit specification, operational handbook, arrangements document / group award strategy document

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

If no alternative timescale is stated in an assessment strategy, assessors and verifiers of regulated qualifications must achieve a relevant assessor / verifier qualification within 18 months of starting to practise.

Assessors and IVs for regulated qualifications must undertake and keep records of relevant CPD activities.

Additional requirements for qualifications regulated by Ofqual

You must inform Qualifications Scotland of any changes to assessors and internal verifiers involved in the delivery of internally assessed qualifications regulated by Ofqual.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You should have policies and procedures for recruitment, selection, training and deployment of sufficient numbers of staff as assessors, internal verifiers and any other roles involved in the assessment process.

If the regulatory requirements or assessment strategy for a qualification state specific requirements for staff qualifications and experience, you must take steps to ensure these are addressed when you recruit and deploy staff as assessors and IVs.

Job descriptions or adverts for a specific role should outline these specific requirements.

Criterion 2.2: Assessors and internal verifiers must be given induction training on Qualifications Scotland qualifications and requirements

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- Information on the topics you will cover at assessor and internal verifier induction
- Information on how you will record assessor and internal verifier induction such as Template induction checklist

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Staff induction pack
- Staff handbook

Why is this criterion important?

It is important that all new assessors and IVs have an induction programme so they are clear about their roles and responsibilities and are familiar with your centre's processes, procedures and documentation for the qualification. This is not only for staff new to the organisation, but for those who have been allocated these roles for the first time. Updates must also be provided to staff who have been inactive in the roles of assessors and IVs for some time or where there have been any significant changes to your centre's procedures.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must keep records of assessor and internal verifier induction.

Before undertaking any assessment activity, assessors and IVs must be provided with induction training which covers:

- your qualification assessment strategy
- the content of your candidate induction (see criterion 3.1)
- your internal verification procedures (see criterion 4.1)
- your malpractice policy / procedures (see criterion 1.5)
- your conflict of interest in assessment policy / procedures (see criterion 1.6)
- secure storage and transport of assessment materials (see criteria 4.5 and 5.2)
- your retention policy for candidate assessment evidence (see criteria 4.7)
- your retention policy for candidate records (see criterion 6.4)

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Assessor and internal verifier induction may be combined with your organisation's new staff induction, covering specific and generic information about your centre, but the role-specific information in the topics above must be included in full.

As a minimum, your record of assessor and internal verifier induction can be a checklist, but you may provide induction information using other methods, such as a staff handbook, an online module, or a classroom presentation.

Additional support

An exemplar assessor and verifier induction checklist can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

Criterion 2.3: There must be a documented system for initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- procedure describing how you will review assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials

Why is this criterion important?

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have sufficient resources to enable all candidates to achieve the competences defined in the qualifications you offer.

You must review your resources regularly to ensure that they remain relevant, current and available in quantities appropriate to the qualification requirements and candidate numbers.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

As part of the approval process you must undertake an initial review of all your resources.

When you seek approval for new Qualifications Scotland qualifications you must plan and allocate staff and physical resources, and learning, teaching and assessment materials, before you submit approval forms to Qualifications Scotland.

Colleges in Scotland with devolved authority for approval must have a documented approval procedure and hold records of the approval process they carried out before submitting notification to Qualifications Scotland. These records must be retained for three years.

Your internal procedures must reflect the size and complexity of your organisation. You must document roles and responsibilities relating to approval for new qualifications. Organisations with devolved authority for approval must have full internal approval procedures.

All organisations must be able to evidence a link between resource and activity planning and making approval submissions to Qualifications Scotland.

All communication between your centre and Qualifications Scotland about qualifications approval must be through the co-ordinator. This is to ensure that the co-ordinator is aware of additional approval applications and that these have been fully processed through your own internal procedures before being submitted to Qualifications Scotland.

You must document ongoing reviews of assessment environments and equipment, and of reference, learning and assessment materials. You may have one procedure for this, or it may be covered under a range of activities (eg staff meetings, internal verification, planning, feedback from staff and candidates).

Criterion 2.5: All sites where candidates undertake assessments for Qualifications Scotland qualifications must be safe and appropriately resourced, and must provide access for candidates, staff and Qualifications Scotland personnel

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A procedure for checking the suitability of assessment sites not owned by your organisation (if applicable)

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Template site checklists (or other documentation covering the same points)
- Example agreements with other organisations that own sites you intend to use for assessment

Why is this criterion important?

Some assessment sites may be owned or managed by another organisation that has its own processes, policies and procedures. These are referred to in Qualifications Scotland guidance as ‘alternative assessment sites.’

You must ensure that your quality assurance systems extend to all sites you use to assess candidates and ensure that all alternative assessment sites have appropriate resources for each qualification you assess there, and that candidates have a consistent experience wherever they are located.

Qualifications Scotland verifiers will report to Qualifications Scotland any concerns they have about safety or access arrangements at an assessment site they have seen.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

If you plan to use alternative assessment sites (as defined above), you must provide documentation that records the checks you will undertake to ensure their suitability.

You must ensure that access to alternative assessment sites is available at suitable times for candidates and staff.

You must also ensure that, if requested, access for Qualifications Scotland staff can be arranged. For some assessment sites it will not be possible to provide physical access — for example, oil rigs, construction sites, or care facilities for vulnerable people. You should state this in any relevant documentation so that an alternative arrangement can be made with Qualifications Scotland.

Guidance on the use of assessment sites owned by other organisations is available on Qualifications Scotland's website. This includes:

- a declaration form for sites in other countries / nations
- exemplar site checklists, which you can use in their entirety, or use to ensure that your own documentation incorporates all the checks required by Qualifications Scotland

Additional support

Guidance on the use of alternative assessment sites and remote assessment

Systems approval criteria: Category 3: Candidate Support

You must show that candidates will be supported and guided through the qualifications for which they are entered. Please ensure you send a copy of the relevant documents with your completed application.

Criterion 3.1: Candidate induction must include information about the Qualifications Scotland qualification and Qualifications Scotland requirements

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- Information on the topics you will cover at candidate induction
- Information on how you will record candidate induction such as Template induction checklist

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Candidate / learner agreement
- Induction pack / Course joining Instructions
- Induction presentation slides
- A 'shell' portfolio

Why is this criterion important?

Providing this information at induction ensures your candidates are aware of the procedures relevant to the qualification they are undertaking and know about their responsibilities and rights

Qualifications Scotland’s essential requirements for all qualification types

You must keep records of candidate induction.

Before you submit entries, candidates must be provided with an induction which covers:

- the content and structure of the qualification
- the roles and responsibilities of the candidate, assessor, Internal and external verifier
- information on guidance and support available to them
- information on how and when assessment will take place and the opportunities for re-assessment (including charging policy, if relevant)
- how feedback on assessments will be provided
- your commitment to providing equal access to assessment

- information on how candidates with additional support needs or alternative assessment needs can request reasonable adjustments to assessments
- your malpractice policy and procedures, and any declarations of authenticity
- your complaint / grievance procedures
- your internal assessment appeals procedures
- notification that their personal information will be sent to Qualifications Scotland for the purposes of entries and certification and maintenance of their record of achievement

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Induction materials may be provided to candidates in hard copy or made available for them to access electronically.

Depending on the nature of the programme and mode of attendance, candidate induction may be as simple as providing these materials, or induction activities may take place over a longer period at the start of the programme.

You must also retain evidence of completed induction; this might be signed checklists or confirmation within an electronic portfolio of receipt and understanding of the information provided.

Additional support

Exemplar 4: Candidate Induction Checklist in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

Criterion 3.4: Policies and procedures must give Qualifications Scotland candidates equal opportunities for assessment

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- An Equal Opportunities Policy or statement, confirming equal access to assessment

Why is this criterion important?

As a Qualifications Scotland approved centre, you must ensure that everyone eligible to take a qualification has an equal chance of benefitting from the services you provide. There must be no discriminatory barriers in the way of anyone who wants to take Qualifications Scotland qualifications.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

There must be a documented commitment to equal access to assessment.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Qualifications Scotland systems approval focuses on equal opportunities in relation to Qualifications Scotland qualifications and the candidates undertaking them.

Your organisation may already have a policy or procedure which ensures equal opportunities for staff or service users; however, this is unlikely to show a clear commitment to providing equal opportunities for candidates to access assessment.

Within the constraints of available resources and current legislation, you must ensure that Qualifications Scotland candidates are not discriminated against because of any of the protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race and ethnicity
- religion and belief
- sexual orientation

You must cover all these protected characteristics in a policy or statement which clearly outlines your commitment to providing equal opportunities for your candidates to access assessment.

Criterion 3.5: Individual candidates' requirements for assessment arrangement must be discussed, identified, implemented and recorded

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A procedure or statement which confirms you will provide support and assessment arrangements for candidates with additional needs
- An assessment arrangements procedure covering how the additional needs of candidates are identified, agreed, communicated and reviewed

Why is this criterion important?

Assessment arrangements, or reasonable adjustments to assessment, allow candidates who are disabled, and / or who have been identified as having additional support needs or alternative assessment needs, appropriate arrangements to access the assessment without compromising its integrity.

Candidates are individuals with a diverse range of needs, and it is important that you consider their individual assessment needs when selecting the most appropriate method of assessment.

This applies to both internal and external assessment, although you are only required to notify Qualifications Scotland of proposed arrangements for external assessments.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must inform all candidates at induction that assessment arrangements to address additional support needs are available.

You must have documented procedures for managing assessment arrangements for both internal and external assessments (where applicable), including roles and responsibilities for each stage of the procedures.

Procedures must cover:

- How you identify and evidence candidate needs.
- How you determine the most appropriate assessment arrangement for each learner.
- How you tailor decisions to the learner's needs across different subjects.
- Your process for internal verification of assessment arrangements decisions, to ensure that AA decisions are consistent and aligned with Qualifications Scotland standards.
- How you record assessment arrangements put in place.
- How you make learners aware of the assessment arrangements they will be provided with in teaching, learning and assessments, and how you obtain their agreement.
- How you obtain information about existing assessment arrangements from other centres (where relevant under partnership arrangements for delivery of Qualifications Scotland qualifications).

Additional requirements for National Courses for external assessment

In addition to the requirements for all qualifications, for National Courses your procedures must cover:

- How you will notify Qualifications Scotland of assessment arrangement requests for external assessment, via the Assessment Arrangements Request (AAR) system.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

Reasonable adjustments are adjustments made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification without compromising its integrity. This means that Qualifications Scotland does not need to make any adjustment to the competences being tested in an assessment and that it may not be possible to make reasonable adjustments where:

- an assessment requires the demonstration of a practical competence
- the assessment criteria must be fully met
- the units or qualifications confer a licence to practise

You may need to contact Qualifications Scotland to request a reasonable adjustment in an assessment if the arrangement changes the published assessment requirements in any significant way (see guidance on SVQs and qualifications regulated by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales in the sources of support below).

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Refer to the specific guidance on writing assessment arrangement procedures in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

You must consider how you will address any barriers to accessing assessment your candidates may have, in order to provide an assessment environment that allows them to demonstrate the competence they have acquired, without compromising the integrity of the assessment.

These barriers might include disability, identified learning difficulties, physical or sensory impairment, or mental health issues.

Many qualifications which are internally assessed have flexible assessment strategies which allow you to use different methods of assessment to generate candidate evidence, provided that this does not change the assessment standards and the competences being assessed.

For externally assessed National Courses, or internally assessed qualifications with specified forms of assessment, you will need to consider the identified needs of the candidate, as well as the assessment standards, to determine the most suitable assessment arrangements which allow them to demonstrate what they know and can do.

Advice on different types of assessment arrangements you could consider is available in the additional support section below.

Additional support

Information on assessment arrangements is available in the Guide to Assessment

Guidance on writing assessment arrangement procedures can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

Information on assessment arrangements for National Courses and external assessments: Assessment arrangements resources - Qualifications Scotland

Reasonable adjustments in qualifications regulated by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales

Information on Reasonable Adjustments for SVQs and alternative competence-based qualifications regulated by Qualifications Scotland Accreditation

Criterion 3.6: Candidate complaints must be handled in line with a documented complaints procedure which meets Qualifications Scotland requirements

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A complaints or grievance procedure which includes information on when candidates can complain to Qualifications Scotland and (where applicable) the relevant regulator (Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales)

Why is this criterion important?

Qualifications Scotland wants to ensure that candidates undertaking our qualifications are provided with a complaints / grievance process that allows candidates to raise concerns relating to assessment.

A robust complaint handling procedure will provide candidates with a structured mechanism to raise assessment-related concerns with your centre and allow investigation and response / resolution

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must provide candidates undertaking Qualifications Scotland qualifications with a complaints / grievance process that allows them to raise concerns relating to assessment.

The procedure can be invoked at any stage of a candidate's qualification and should be used for complaints about assessment-related matters. However, it must be clear that disagreement about academic judgement will not be handled through the complaints procedure and must be processed through the appeals procedure (see criterion 4.8).

If a candidate remains dissatisfied at the end of your centre's complaints procedure, you must provide full and clear information about the types of independent external review available following completion of your own complaints procedure. For assessment-related complaints, candidates must be informed that they have the right to escalate their complaint to Qualifications Scotland.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

Candidates undertaking regulated qualifications also have the right to ask the relevant regulator (Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales) to look at their complaint if they remain dissatisfied after your final response has been issued, and they have also exhausted Qualifications Scotland awarding body's complaints procedure. This must be stated in your centre's procedures if you deliver regulated qualifications.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Refer to the specific guidance on writing complaints procedures in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

You must develop a documented complaints / grievance procedure and ensure that this is included as part of candidate induction. Reasonable timescales must be attached to each stage of the process. There must be at least two people with whom candidates can raise complaints initially.

Your procedures must also include mechanisms for:

- telling candidates about the complaints procedure
- notifying the candidate of the outcome and subsequent actions
- appropriate signposting for external review
- recording and retaining records

Where the candidates are employees of your centre, your documented procedure may be staff grievance procedures, but the escalation processes described in the Qualifications Scotland requirements and Additional requirements for regulated qualifications sections above would still apply and must be clearly communicated.

You must inform all candidates that Qualifications Scotland can consider complaints from any candidates about assessment-related issues — including broader issues such as the conduct of and environment for assessment — but only if the candidate has already exhausted your centre's complaints procedure, or if they feel your centre has unreasonably failed to apply its procedure correctly.

Qualifications Scotland will not consider complaints about the wider experience of being a student (such as student support services, funding, student facilities).

Disagreement about academic judgement will not be handled through the complaints procedure and must be processed through the appeals procedure (see criterion 4.8).

Complaints must be analysed for trends, to inform quality improvement in your centre. Details of any complaints or grievances must be logged and retained for review by Qualifications Scotland quality assurance staff.

Complaints ombudsmen

If your centre falls within the jurisdiction of a complaints ombudsman, for example the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO), you should be aware of any additional requirements to meet statutory obligations.

Additional support

Guidance on writing complaints procedures can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials

Systems approval criteria: Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

You must provide evidence of your systems, policies and procedures to ensure all assessment decisions will be consistent with qualification standards, and how you will maintain records of the internal verification process. Please ensure you send a copy of the relevant documents with your completed application.

Criterion 4.1: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be documented, monitored and reviewed to meet Qualifications Scotland requirements

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- An internal verification policy or procedure which describes your internal activities and responsibilities at each of the three stages of internal verification: before assessment, during assessment (including your sampling strategy) and after assessment
- The forms / records to be used to record internal verification activities

Additional evidence you could provide:

- A schedule for internal verification activity

Why is this criterion important?

Internal verification is a crucial element of Qualifications Scotland's quality assurance. It ensures that all candidates entered for the same qualification are assessed fairly and consistently to the specified standard.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

Your internal verification procedures must include the three stages of internal verification which are before assessment, during assessment, and after assessment.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

It is a requirement of being a Qualifications Scotland approved centre that you operate an effective and documented internal quality assurance system. You must regularly review the effectiveness of your procedures and make any necessary improvements. You must also ensure that changes made by Qualifications Scotland are adopted.

Your documented internal verification policy and procedures must cover the following:

Stage 1 (Before assessment)

At the before assessment stage, your procedures must describe how you:

- check assessment instruments for validity, currency and fitness for purpose, including Qualifications Scotland-devised assessments
- submit centre-devised assessments to Qualifications Scotland for prior verification, where appropriate
- ensure all assessors and IVs have a common understanding of the standards required, even when assessments have been published by Qualifications Scotland

Stage 2 (During assessment)

At the during assessment stage, your procedures must describe:

- how and when you internally verify candidate evidence
- the documentation you use to record assessment and verification activities
- your schedule of assessor and IV meetings and how these are recorded
- how you record standardisation activities
- how you minimise the risk of plagiarism

Criterion 4.5: Assessment materials and candidate evidence (including examination question papers, scripts and electronically stored evidence) must be stored and transported securely

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A procedure for storing assessment materials, for notifying Qualifications Scotland of any breaches of security and for ensuring that all staff are aware that any breach in the security of assessment material from Qualifications Scotland's secure site must be reported immediately to Qualifications Scotland.

Why is this criterion important?

This is to ensure that the security and integrity of the assessment material is maintained. In particular, this relates to assessments where a candidate would gain an unfair advantage by seeing the assessment in advance and the assessment is carried out under controlled conditions (for example, an HN Graded Unit or Qualifications Scotland Advanced Graded Unit examination).

This includes both assessments developed within your centre and assessments produced and published by Qualifications Scotland.

Candidate evidence must be stored securely, to minimise the risks of malpractice and to ensure that it is available for internal and external verification.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must make all staff aware that any breach in the security of the assessment materials published on the secure site must be reported immediately to Qualifications Scotland.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Refer to the specific guidance on writing procedures for security of assessments in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials

You must develop suitable practical arrangements in all assessment sites for the secure storage of assessment materials and candidate evidence. If you plan to transport materials between assessment sites you must do so securely.

You must document your arrangements for secure storage and transport and cover these during assessor and IV induction (see criterion 2.2).

Qualifications Scotland's secure website for centres is an online resource containing assessment exemplar content and other secure information used in the delivery of our suite of qualifications. To access the secure site, you must be approved for qualifications which have materials on the secure site. A username and password are required to access the secure site, and these are issued to co-ordinators. Access to the secure site for assessors and IVs is granted at the discretion of the co-ordinator. It is your responsibility to ensure that the security of assessment materials accessed from the secure site is maintained within your centre. You must document roles and responsibilities and procedures for notifying Qualifications Scotland immediately of any breach of security of Qualifications Scotland assessment materials in your centre.

You must also have in place appropriate procedures for ensuring that security of assessments is maintained when using technology for remote assessment. These must include controls on the assessment environment and the use of remote invigilation, where appropriate.

If you use an e-portfolio system you should include information or a link to the specific user guide and security requirements.

When using Qualifications Scotland's digital assessment platform SOLAR, you must only create valid candidates with a Scottish Candidate Number (SCN), and you must only schedule summative assessments for valid candidates. Scheduling invalid candidates for a summative assessment in SOLAR may constitute malpractice.

Additional support

Guidance on writing procedures for the security of internal assessments can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

Advice for centres in using technology to support assessment remotely

Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with Qualifications Scotland requirements

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A policy for retention of candidate assessment evidence

Why is this criterion important?

Candidate assessment evidence must be retained for defined periods for the purposes of internal and external verification, and in case of any resulting queries, candidate internal assessment appeals or suspected malpractice.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must retain candidate assessment evidence for the periods set out in the Evidence Retention Requirements Table on the Qualifications Scotland website.

If an appeal against an internal assessment result is made:

You must retain records, including all materials and candidate evidence, until the appeal has been resolved.

If an investigation of suspected malpractice is carried out:

You must retain related records and documentation for three years for non-regulated qualifications (and six years for regulated qualifications, see below).

If an appeal to Qualifications Scotland against the outcome of a malpractice investigation is made:

Assessment records must be retained for six years.

If an investigation involving a potential criminal prosecution or civil claim is carried out:

Records and documentation must be retained for six years after the case and any appeal has been heard. If there is any doubt about whether criminal or civil proceedings will take place, you must keep records for the full six-year period.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

If an appeal is made to Qualifications Scotland against an internal assessment result in a regulated qualification:

You must retain assessment and internal verification records for six years after the appeal. If you have a legitimate reason, you may retain records for a longer period.

If an investigation is made of suspected malpractice in a regulated qualification:

You must retain related records and documentation for six years.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You must note the evidence retention requirements for the specific qualifications you wish to offer. These are displayed on the Evidence Retention Requirements Table on the Qualifications Scotland website.

You must document the specific retention requirements which will apply to your centre and cover these in induction for assessors and IVs (see criterion 2.2)

Candidate assessment evidence may be in electronic, paper, video or audio formats. Whatever the format, it must be stored securely (see criterion 4.5).

There are separate requirements for retention of records of assessment outcomes / candidate achievement (see criterion 6.4).

Additional support

Qualifications Scotland Evidence Retention Requirements

The Appeals Process: Information for Centres

Malpractice: Information for centres

Criterion 4.8: Internal assessment appeals must be handled in line with a documented procedure which meets Qualifications Scotland requirements

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- An assessment appeals procedure with appropriate stages

Why is this criterion important?

If a candidate disagrees with an internal assessment decision, he / she must have the right to appeal. They must know the grounds on which an appeal can be made, and the procedure for doing so.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

Candidates undertaking **regulated qualifications** have additional stages of appeal:

- to Qualifications Scotland (the awarding body), once the centre's appeals procedure has been exhausted
- to Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales if they feel that the centre and / or Qualifications Scotland (the awarding body) has not dealt with the appeal appropriately

Qualifications Scotland Accreditation, Ofqual or Qualifications Wales cannot overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements but may investigate the effectiveness of your centre's and / or Qualifications Scotland's appeals process and require corrective action.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Refer to the specific guidance on writing internal assessment appeals procedures in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials.

You must develop a documented internal appeals procedure and ensure that this is included as part of candidate induction (see criterion 3.1).

Reasonable timescales must be attached to each stage of the process.

Your appeals procedure must include mechanisms for:

- dissemination of information about the procedure to candidates
- notifying the candidate of the outcome and subsequent actions
- recording and retaining records

There must be at least three internal stages in your procedure, for example:

- Stage 1: the candidate's first point of contact is the assessor, then if still unresolved...
- Stage 2: Internal Verifier, then if still unresolved...
- Stage 3 independent third party (part of organisation, or another centre, but not Qualifications Scotland)

Details of any appeals must be retained for review by Qualifications Scotland quality assurance staff.

If your centre will offer regulated qualifications, you must inform candidates that they have additional stages of appeal (see Additional requirements for regulated qualifications, above) See Criteria 4.7 and 6.4 for information on retention of evidence in the case of an appeal to Qualifications Scotland.

Additional support

Guidance on writing internal assessment appeals procedures can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials

Centre guide to Qualifications Scotland appeals procedures - Qualifications Scotland

The Appeals Process: Information for Centres

Systems approval criteria: Category 5: External assessment

Note: This category only applies where centres are delivering Qualifications Scotland qualifications with assessments set and marked by Qualifications Scotland. In the main, these will be National Courses (National 5, Highers and Advanced Highers) with external examinations, and external coursework in some cases.

There are very few vocational qualifications with external assessment, and, for centres that only deliver internally assessed qualifications, these criteria will be marked as Not Applicable in the systems verification report.

This section will only apply if you are planning to offer qualifications that have assessments which are set and marked by Qualifications Scotland examiners. You are required to provide evidence of your systems, policies and procedures for administering external assessment activities on Qualifications Scotland's behalf.

There is only one set of evidence requirements for the criteria in this category.

What evidence do I need to provide for the criteria in category 5?

You must provide:

- A procedure for managing external assessment which includes roles and responsibilities
- A procedure for storing, transporting, and dispatching assessment materials and candidate evidence which includes roles and responsibilities

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Guidance to candidates on malpractice in examinations
- Procedures for checking candidate identity at examinations
- A description of your physical secure storage facilities for examination materials and candidate assessments

Criterion 5.1: Assessment evidence must be the candidates' own work, generated under Qualifications Scotland's required conditions.

Why is this criterion important?

Any irregularity in the conduct of an external examination can have a serious impact on all candidates taking the examination, not just those in one centre.

You must take the appropriate steps to ensure that no instances of malpractice occur and that evidence is authenticated.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for centres delivering National Courses or other qualifications with external assessment

Conditions of assessment will be qualification-specific and must be communicated and adhered to within your centre. You must take appropriate steps to prevent malpractice occurring and to ensure that candidate evidence is authenticated.

You must ensure that appropriate resources are made available so that no candidates are disadvantaged.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You must put in place procedures for the correct implementation of Qualifications Scotland requirements for:

- exam conditions
- secure storage and handling of examination papers and candidates' completed examination scripts
- managing Qualifications Scotland visiting assessment (for some subjects with performance-based externally assessed coursework)
- submitting coursework to Qualifications Scotland for external marking
- online testing (if applicable)

You must clearly allocate responsibilities, eg those of exams officers and invigilators.

You should develop and document a process for assessing and reviewing accommodation and facilities to ensure they are appropriate for all candidates, and that the required resources (such as IT) are in place for scheduled external assessments.

Additional support

Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework

Qualification-specific conditions of assessment stated in the course specifications on the Qualifications Scotland website National Qualifications subjects page

Criterion 5.2: Assessment materials and candidate evidence, (including examination question papers, scripts and electronically stored evidence) must be securely stored and transported

Why is this criterion important?

This is to ensure that the security and integrity of the examination material is maintained throughout the examination diet.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for centres delivering National Courses with external assessment

Question papers and any other confidential examination materials must be stored securely at your centre's registered address in a secure room solely assigned to examinations for the duration of the examination diet. Only persons authorised by the head of centre may be allowed access to this facility.

You will be required to complete and submit to Qualifications Scotland an annual self-assessment form about your secure storage facilities and arrangements for National Course examination question papers and materials.

You must also inform Qualifications Scotland if your arrangements for secure storage of Qualifications Scotland examination papers and candidate evidence change.

You must inform Qualifications Scotland immediately if the security of question papers or confidential examination materials is breached.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You must put in place suitable practical arrangements in all assessment sites that are to be used for external assessment.

You must document:

- the roles and responsibilities of relevant staff
- how you will manage the secure storage of examination question papers and materials, from the point when the papers and / or materials are delivered to your centre, until candidate scripts are uplifted or returned to Qualifications Scotland

Transport arrangements within and between assessment sites must ensure the security of the materials.

Qualifications Scotland staff and appointees have the right of access at any time to your centre's secure storage facilities. It is your responsibility to plan and arrange for the possibility of visits by Qualifications Scotland staff or appointees, as visits may be made without prior notice.

Criterion 5.3: The centre must submit, where appropriate, within published timelines, results services requests

Why is this criterion important?

The Examination Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (EECCS) supports learners:

- who were unable to attend the exam
- whose performance in an exam has been affected by a personal circumstance, or an unplanned incident on the day.

This is a pre-certification service that covers situations where an exceptional circumstance has impacted a learner's performance **on the day of an exam**.

The Appeals Service allows candidates to request a marking review of externally marked examinations after they have received their certificates.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for centres delivering National Courses with external assessment

You must ensure that both candidates and centre staff involved in external assessments are aware of these services and follow the required processes and timescales.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

You must keep up to date with the current Qualifications Scotland arrangements for exceptional circumstances and appeals, and ensure that these are communicated to your staff and candidates.

You must put in place documented procedures for handling requests for these services from your candidates and for collating the necessary information and submitting it to Qualifications Scotland within the required timescales.

Additional support

Exceptional circumstances - Qualifications Scotland

Appeals service - Qualifications Scotland

Systems approval criteria: Category 6: Data Management

You are required to provide evidence of your systems, policies and procedures for collecting and supplying complete and accurate data to Qualifications Scotland. Please ensure you send a copy of the relevant documents with your completed application.

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A documented data management procedure (One procedure can cover criteria 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4)
- Roles and responsibilities, for data management staff
- An enrolment form which shows the information you will gather from candidates

Criterion 6.1: Candidates' personal data submitted by centres to Qualifications Scotland must accurately reflect the current status of the candidate

Why is this criterion important?

Qualifications Scotland holds personal data on candidates in order to identify and certificate candidates.

Qualifications Scotland may have to contact candidates directly and therefore needs to have direct contact details, ie home addresses. There is also a risk that candidate correspondence / certificates might be sent to the wrong centre.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

Your centre must have a documented data management procedure and abide by the Data Protection principles in relation to both the collection of data for transmission to Qualifications Scotland and in the dissemination of data from Qualifications Scotland.

Candidates' home addresses must be used, other than in reasonable circumstances (eg the candidate does not have a home address). If your centre temporarily changes any addresses (for example so that the certificates are sent to the centre itself), you must reinstate the candidates' home addresses immediately upon receipt of the certificates. You must have a documented procedure in place to guide this.

Candidates must be informed that their personal data will be sent to Qualifications Scotland for the purposes of entering them for a Qualifications Scotland qualification, for certification and for

maintenance of their record of attainment. Qualifications Scotland's Privacy Statement must be provided to candidates so that they can be made aware how Qualifications Scotland will use the candidate information collected.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Refer to the specific guidance on writing procedures for data management in Systems Approval and Verification: support materials. A single data management procedure can cover all criteria in Category 6.

Include in your data management procedure information on:

Personal data

You provide personal data to Qualifications Scotland when you make a Registration Creation.

'Registration' is the term used by Qualifications Scotland for the process of recording candidate details (ie full name, date of birth, gender, address) onto Connect.

It is essential that you develop a documented process that will ensure that complete, current and accurate data is supplied to Qualifications Scotland.

Your procedures should take account of the fact that registration is a one-time only process - most Scottish candidates will already be registered. However, in certain circumstances it may be necessary to register a candidate.

You must put a process in place to check whether candidates have a Scottish Candidate Number (SCN) before sending their details for initial registration. If a candidate already has an SCN, you may have to update the candidate's personal data, for example to enter their current address.

Appropriate centre staff must be aware of, and implement, your centre's step-by-step procedures for data transfer between the centre and Qualifications Scotland, to ensure that accurate certification takes place.

GDPR / Candidate notification

Qualifications Scotland expects all centres to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation. Candidates must be informed that their personal details will be passed to Qualifications Scotland (as described above in the Qualifications Scotland requirements). This

could be included as a statement on a candidate application or enrolment form. Qualifications Scotland does not require centres to obtain consent for this processing.

Centre use of personal data

Personal information supplied by Qualifications Scotland is for use as a Qualifications Scotland approved centre only. It must not be used for marketing purposes, or any purpose which could reasonably be objected to by a candidate.

You must hold information securely (this applies to electronic files and hard copies) and provide details about your centre's security measures and access controls to candidates.

Additional support

Guidance on writing data management procedures and an example data management flowchart can be found in Systems Approval and Verification: Support Materials.

Criteria 6.2 and 6.3

Criteria 6.2 and 6.3 have the same evidence requirements.

What evidence do I need to provide for criteria 6.2 and 6.3?

You must provide:

- Procedure or statement in your quality manual which describes how you will confirm availability of group award and units and submit candidate entries within appropriate timescales.
- Procedure or statement in your quality manual which describes how you will submit candidate results within appropriate timescales and how you will update data.

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Assessment and internal verification procedures

Criterion 6.2: Data on candidate entries submitted by centres to Qualifications Scotland must accurately reflect the current status of the candidate and the qualification

Why is this criterion important?

Your centre must notify Qualifications Scotland of registered candidates undertaking units and awards as soon as possible after they have enrolled on their programme of study. This is to ensure that:

- learners undertaking Qualifications Scotland qualifications are entered as Qualifications Scotland candidates, with the associated responsibilities and entitlements
- Qualifications Scotland can plan qualification verification visits effectively
- there is accurate certification of candidates when results are submitted

Entry information must be kept up to date to avoid delays in the release of certificates.

You must have a process in place for checking the status of the qualification, to ensure that you are able to submit entries, and the candidates can be resulted and certificated, on time. Entries cannot be accepted for qualifications which your centre is not approved to offer, or where the qualification is finished or in its lapsing period.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

You must have a process in place to ensure that your centre is approved to offer the qualification before starting delivery and making entries, and to check that the correct unit and group award codes are used for entries.

Candidate entries must be made as soon as possible after their enrolment on the programme. (Except for qualifications which are part of an examination diet with associated key dates.)

You must update candidate data at the recorded completion date, by submitting results, withdrawing the candidate (from units and group awards, as appropriate) or, if a candidate has been granted an extension, extending the completion date.

You must not submit an entry and a result for a candidate at the same time. Exceptions to this are courses of a very short duration, such as between one and three days. Examples include Emergency First Aid at Work and Street Works Re-assessment.

If you deliver qualifications which are verified as group awards, rather than as individual units (eg SVQs and Skills for Work courses), you must submit a candidate's entry for the group award at the start of their study.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

Regulated qualifications (including all SVQs) are 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 only be entered on the qualification 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 candidates must be entered before the lapsing date and must have successfully completed the qualification by the end date. If your centre offers SVQs, you must check that the award is not in its lapsing period before starting delivery.

Some qualifications have pre-set lapsing periods, eg two years for an SVQ 2.

Your centre must ensure that candidates seeking certification for a full SVQ, SVQ unit, a Workplace Core Skill unit or the assessor / verifier units are entered for the award at least 10 weeks before a claim for certification is made (’10-week rule’).

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Include in your data management procedure information on:

Entry data

Entry data is supplied to Qualifications Scotland initially as an ‘entries creation’. As candidates progress through qualifications, data is submitted to Qualifications Scotland as an ‘entries update’.

Completion dates (HNs)

Completion dates for an HN course can be up to four years from the date of entry. There is currently no enforceable lapse period for Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications or HN qualifications.

Completion dates (units)

Completion dates for units can be up to two years from the date of entry but cannot go beyond Qualifications Scotland’s finish date of the qualification.

Completion dates (SVQs)

Completion dates for an SVQ can be up to five years from the date of entry but cannot go beyond Qualifications Scotland’s finish date of the qualification.

Data cleansing

Based on your qualification type and client base, your centre must make decisions on when and how often data cleansing and updating should take place (for example, to extend completion dates where a candidate has an agreed extension, or to withdraw entries when the candidate is no longer active). Procedures for data cleansing must be included in your documented system of data management.

Criterion 6.3: Data on candidate results submitted by centres to Qualifications Scotland must accurately reflect the current status of the candidate and the qualification

Why is this criterion important?

This is to ensure that results are submitted at the appropriate time in order to:

- allow Qualifications Scotland the opportunity to carry out quality assurance
- give Qualifications Scotland sufficient time for the smooth operation of certification processes
- prevent any unnecessary delays to candidates receiving certificates that they are entitled to

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

Qualification-specific requirements for the submission of candidate results must be communicated and adhered to within your centre.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

For regulated qualifications, certificates cannot be issued after the Qualifications Scotland finish date. This means that any candidates who are entered on the qualification must have successfully completed it and been resulted by the finish date (see criterion 6.2 for an explanation of the finish date).

You cannot claim certification for SVQ awards, workplace Core Skills units and assessor and verifier units within 10 weeks of the entry date of the qualification ('10-week rule'). This does not apply to individual SVQ units or short courses (eg one day courses).

Additional requirements for centres delivering National Courses with external assessment

There are specific requirements and published key dates for National Qualifications, and if your centre is approved to offer these qualifications you must note and adhere to these. These are updated every year and can be found on Connect.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Include in your data management procedure information on:

Processing results

You must include details of how results, once they have been confirmed through your centre's internal quality assurance processes, will be passed from assessors / IVs to data management staff, with timescales for the submission of results on Connect.

Criterion 6.4: There must be an effective and documented system for the accurate recording, storage and retention of assessment records, internal verification records and candidate records of achievement in line with Qualifications Scotland requirements.

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- A policy for retention of assessment, internal verification, and candidate records
- A description of how assessment, internal verification and candidate records will be stored

Why is this criterion important?

This is to ensure that accurate records of candidate achievement are retained securely to assist any future quality assurance enquiries and to minimise any risk of wrongful certification claims.

It also helps to maintain national standards by allowing for the review of assessment over time.

Qualifications Scotland's essential requirements for all qualification types

Following completion of Qualifications Scotland qualifications, your centre must keep, for one calendar year, the following records:

- a list of candidates registered with Qualifications Scotland for each qualification offered in your centre

- details of candidate assessment, including the name of the assessor, location, date and outcome
- details of internal verification activity
- details of certificates claimed

These records must be made available to the external verifier and Qualifications Scotland on request.

Records must be stored securely and in a retrievable format.

If an investigation of suspected malpractice is carried out:

You must retain related records and documentation for three years for non-regulated qualifications (six years for regulated qualifications. See Requirements for regulated qualifications below)

If an appeal to Qualifications Scotland against the outcome of a malpractice investigation is made:

Assessment records must be retained for six years.

If an investigation involving a potential criminal prosecution or civil claim Is carried out:

Records and documentation must be retained for six years after the case and any appeal has been heard.

If there is in any doubt about whether criminal or civil proceedings will take place, your centre should keep records for the full six-year period.

Additional requirements for regulated qualifications

Centres delivering Ofqual or Qualifications Wales regulated qualifications must retain records of candidate assessment for at least six years.

If an appeal against an internal assessment result Is made:

You must retain records, including all materials and evidence, until the appeal has been resolved.

If an appeal is made to Qualifications Scotland against an internal assessment result in a regulated qualification:

Assessment and internal verification records must be retained for six years thereafter, unless there is a legitimate reason to retain records for a further period.

How do I develop a system to meet this criterion?

Develop a separate policy or include in your data management procedure information on:

Record retention

You must describe your arrangements for the accurate recording and storage of the records listed in Qualifications Scotland requirements. Include details of the required retention periods.

Additional support

Retention of Candidate Assessment Records Table

Completing the form: section 9 Qualifications Approval

Please indicate which qualification(s) are you seeking approval for initially?

Please complete the separate Qualifications Approval form, information to help you complete this form can be found in Part B of this guide.

Completing the form: section 10 Declaration

Please accept, sign and date the declaration regarding the accuracy of your application.

Submitting your Systems Approval application

Please send you completed application and the evidence of your centre's systems, policies and procedures to approvalapplications@qualifications.gov.scot.

Part B: Your qualification approval application

A list of all the qualifications that Qualifications Scotland offers can be found in the Qualifications section of our website. Here you can search by qualification family (eg Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications, HN, SVQ) or by titles or words that appear in titles. Your Business Development or International team contact can also advise you about which qualifications are available.

If you intend to offer Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs), you will need to obtain a copy of the most up-to-date and relevant sector skills council (SSC) assessment strategy. Please speak to your Business Development or Qualifications Scotland International contact for advice.

If you are offering other Qualifications Scotland qualifications, you should establish whether there are documents that accompany the unit specifications, such as course specifications or group award specifications, as these may contain details that affect your choice of qualification and the type of resources you need to provide.

Completing the form: sections 1–5: About your centre

1 Centre contact details

Provide the main postal address of your centre. This should be the same address you provided with your Part A application

2 Key contact points

Please provide details for your co-ordinator. All communications about your application will be sent to this person.

3 Type of qualification

Indicate which type of qualification you are applying for.

4 Qualification and units

Indicate the qualifications you are seeking approval to offer.

For Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications, NextGen: HN or Higher National awards please provide the first six units that you intend to deliver, from the list of units you are seeking

approval for. Two of the six units provided must be from the subject area of the group award i.e. if applying for HND Financial Services, two units must be financial services units.

5 Appendices for additional qualifications

If you are applying to offer more than one qualification in the same subject or occupational area, you must complete a copy of the Supporting Document: Additional Qualification form for each additional qualification and email them to us with your application.

Enter the qualification title and file name for each document you will be emailing.

Completing the form: section 6: How you will deliver and assess the Qualifications Scotland award

In these sections you need to provide evidence to demonstrate your centre's understanding of and compliance with Qualifications Scotland's quality assurance criteria. Some of the tables in the application form direct you to provide additional attachments to support your application.

Category	Qualification Approval Criteria
2: Resources	2.1, 2.4
3: Candidate support	3.2, 3.3
4: Internal assessment and verification	4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9

Qualification approval criteria: Category 2: Resources

To demonstrate your centre's compliance against the resources category, please provide evidence of the reference, learning and assessment materials, assessment environments and equipment, resources and staff that your centre has in place to support the delivery of Qualifications Scotland qualifications.

Criterion 2.1: Assessors and internal verifiers must be competent to assess and internally verify, in line with the requirements of the qualification.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Staff details

You must provide:

- A completed copy of the Staff Qualifications and Experience form, for each member of staff

Additional evidence you could provide:

- Evidence of membership of professional bodies
- Experience of working with Qualifications Scotland qualifications
- Educational quality assurance experience
- The numbers of staff to be involved in assessment and internal verification

Why is this criterion important?

To ensure the validity and integrity of the qualifications offered by Qualifications Scotland, it is important that assessors and internal verifiers have the appropriate qualifications and occupational competence for qualifications they are assessing and / or verifying.

Your awareness of these requirements and the processes you have in place for addressing them will be checked during your application.

Qualifications Scotland requirements for specific qualification types

SVQ assessors / verifiers

SVQ assessors / verifiers must have the technical experience and skills and / or qualifications stated in the sector's assessment strategy. Each strategy is written by a sector skills council that has responsibility for a designated occupational area.

Centres coming forward for approval should always refer to the relevant assessment strategy for information on experience, skills and qualifications.

Unless otherwise stated in an assessment strategy, SVQ assessors / verifiers must hold or be working towards the following assessor / verifier qualifications within 18 months of starting their role:

- LandD9D: Assess Workplace Competence Using Direct Methods (LandD9D)
- LandD9DI: Assess Workplace Competence Using Direct and Indirect Methods (LandD9DI)
- LandD11: Internally Monitor and Maintain the Quality of Workplace Assessment (LandD11)
- RQF Workplace Assessor / Verifier Qualifications

With appropriate, planned continuing professional development (CPD) the following qualifications are also acceptable:

- D32: Assess Candidate Performance
- D33: Assess Candidates using Different Sources of Evidence
- D34: Internally Verify the Assessment Process
- A1: Assess candidates using a range of methods
- A2: Assess Candidates' Performance through Observation
- V1: Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process
- TQFE / TQSE (appropriate for assessor role only for SVQs)
- QCF Workplace Assessor / Verifier Qualifications

Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) assessors / verifiers

Assessors / verifiers must meet any mandatory requirements set out in the RQF unit specification.

If there are no mandatory requirements set out in the unit specification, competence in assessment or internal verification can be demonstrated by:

- holding other qualifications that include relevant and sufficient assessment or verification components, or / and
- providing evidence of having successfully practised as an assessor and / or verifier of awarding organisation qualifications holding other qualifications that include relevant and sufficient assessment or verification components, or
- providing evidence of having successfully practised as an assessor and / or verifier of awarding organisation qualifications

RQF assessor verifiers must also have the technical experience and skills and / or qualifications stated in the sector's assessment strategy / unit specification.

Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications, HN and NQ units

Assessors and internal verifiers must have the required up-to-date occupational experience and / or subject understanding, and, where stipulated, relevant qualifications and CPD. If there are stipulations, you will find them in the assessment strategy, unit specification, operational handbook, or the arrangements document / group award strategy document.

Assessors and internal verifiers of Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications, HN and NQ qualifications also need to be competent in assessment (or internal verification) of the type involved in the qualification. This could mean providing experience of current assessment / verification practice in line with the qualification requirements.

In addition, a relevant qualification in assessment / verification would be best practice but is not essential unless this is a specific requirement of the assessment strategy, unit specification, operational handbook, or arrangements / group award strategy document.

The following assessor and internal verifier qualifications (this is not an exhaustive list) are acceptable for assessing and internally verifying Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications and / or HN units:

- TQFE / TQSE
- Conduct the Assessment Process
- Carry Out the Assessment Process

- Conduct the Internal Verification Process
- Internally Verify the Assessment Process

Any of the qualifications listed under Scottish Vocational Qualifications above are also acceptable (although the L and D / Workplace RQF assessor / verifier units cannot be achieved by assessing / verifying Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications or HN / NQ units).

Other qualifications are also acceptable, so long as they include relevant and sufficient assessment or verification components.

Customised Awards

The document Qualifications Scotland's Customised Awards: Options for recognising assessor and verifier competence provides guidance for centres offering Qualifications Scotland Customised Awards and details the possible recognition routes available for those assessing and / or internally verifying Customised Awards in their particular centre. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team of the Customised Awards team for further information.

Additional support

Qualifications for Assessors and Verifiers - Qualifications Scotland

Choosing Appropriate Assessor and / or Verifier Qualifications

Assessment strategies for specific qualifications can be found at MySector

Criterion 2.4: There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Assessment environments

You must provide:

- An explanation of the types of environment(s) your qualifications will be assessed in such as own premises class / training room; employer workplace; other site(s).

Equipment

You must provide:

- A description of the types of equipment you will have in place to meet the learning and assessment needs of the award.

Reference and learning materials

You must provide:

- A list of the subject learning and reference materials you intend to use.
- (Materials that are electronic / web-based can be shared with QV during the approval event / visit).
- The record(s) you intend to use to record the review of resources. These may include one or more of the following:
    - Pre- Delivery Meeting Form (refer to HNVQ Internal Verification Toolkit)
    - Review / Course Meeting Template (with review as a standing item)
    - Course Review Schedule
- Equipment Lists (including IT equipment, tools, machinery, specialist equipment)

Sites

If you intend to use a site / location not owned by your centre, you must provide:

- A site Selection Checklist for each site.

Partnerships

If you intend to offer any part of the qualification in partnership with another organisation or centre, you must provide:

- A copy of your partnership agreement

Why is this criterion important?

You must ensure that all assessment sites have appropriate resources for each qualification you assess there, and that candidates have a consistent experience wherever they are located.

Initial reviews are important in ensuring resources appropriately meet qualification requirements prior to assessment taking place and are associated with the first stage of internal verification. Evidence of initial review will naturally be provided by you as part of your approval application to Qualifications Scotland.

Ongoing reviews, which the Qualifications Scotland requirements below relate to, ensure resources remain up to date and are fit for purpose. On a second level, they can also significantly aid quality improvement.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Sites

A site is the location where assessment takes place. Before offering a qualification, and periodically thereafter, you should review resources across all your sites to ensure they are appropriate and up to date. You must have a policy and procedure covering which resources will be reviewed and how this will be done. This is covered under systems approval, criterion 2.3.

Qualification approval will cover evidence of initial reviews taking place for the qualification being approved. As part of the review process, you should ensure that all candidates undertaking a Qualifications Scotland qualification have equal access to available resources across all assessment sites.

You may wish to use a site checklist, or equivalent document, when you review your resources, regardless of whether you own the site or not, but a site checklist is not required for sites that you own.

Assessment environment (site)

The sites used by your centre should provide an assessment environment(s) that help candidates to achieve their qualification(s) in full without restrictions. The environment must also ensure their health and safety and provide for any technical / specialist needs.

It is important that you are familiar with the content of the units and assessment strategy / arrangements / course tutor guide documents so that you can form a judgement concerning the suitability of your centre's assessment environment(s).

Equipment

Qualifications Scotland must be satisfied that you have sufficient equipment to allow every candidate to meet the requirements of the qualification at the assessment sites being used. You should check this before applying for approval to offer qualifications. If you intend to use shared resources such as specialised reference materials or equipment, you must provide a partnership arrangement document. Refer to Section B6.3 of the Qualification Approval

Application Form. This completed and signed document must show that agreement has been obtained from the owners of the resources.

Learning materials

Learning materials can be provided in a variety of different forms to suit the subject(s) being learned. Examples might include web-based or hard copy materials such as induction hand-outs / handbooks course exercises, research materials such as induction hand-outs / handbooks course exercises, research briefs, case studies, projects, assignments, lesson plans that identify learning materials media clips, blogs, video, website sources technical publications.

Reference materials

Reference materials help candidates maintain up-to-date skills and / or knowledge in their chosen subject areas and can include trade / professional websites, journals or textbooks media clips, blogs, video, website sources and technical publications. In the case of vocational qualifications, reference materials can also relate to employee handbooks, work instructions, procedures and manuals and codes of practice held in the candidate's workplace.

Qualification approval criteria: Category 3: Candidate Support

To demonstrate your centre's compliance against the Candidate Support category please describe your processes for supporting candidates.

Criterion 3.2: Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Candidate needs and award requirements

You must provide:

- The record / mechanism you intend to use to record the identification of prior achievements, experience, knowledge, skills and / or qualifications, AND record candidate development needs. Record may include one or more of the following:
  - Individual Learning / Development Plans
  - Action Plans
  - Development of Assessment Plans
  - Learning, Teaching and Assessment Plans

Why is this criterion important?

Identifying development needs and prior achievement helps ensure a more targeted approach is taken in helping candidates achieve their qualifications.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Candidate development needs

Prior achievements will include previously gained experience, knowledge, skills and / or qualifications.

The identification of prior achievement helps ensure candidates satisfy any qualification entry requirements and helps determine whether or not any previously gained skills and / or knowledge can provide valid evidence towards the assessment of the Units / Awards the candidate wishes to achieve.

It is also important to identify candidates' development needs in relation to the Units / Awards they wish to achieve to help put in place arrangements for development ahead of assessment.

The result of the matching process could range from 'no / very little development required' to 'significant development' required. 'No / very little development' can be appropriate for eg SVQ candidates who have enough experience to go straight to assessment for the majority of units they are enrolled for.

In the case of taught programmes, such as those associated with Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications, HN and NQ Units and qualifications (this can also apply to some VQ programmes) the general development needs of candidates are usually matched against the award requirements at the programme / course design stage, and then factored into the learning, teaching and assessment plans.

You should document what your processes will be for the identification and addressing of needs.

Criterion 3.3: Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor in order to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.

What evidence do I need to provide?

You must provide:

- The record(s) / mechanism you intend to use to record the regular contact you will have with candidates throughout the duration of their qualification. This may include:
  - Assessment plan templates or assessment schedules
  - Candidate contact records / logs

Why is this criterion important?

It is important that assessors maintain regular contact with candidates throughout the life of their qualification so that progression can be monitored, and timely information and effective support provided.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Contact with assessors

Maintaining contact is a key assessor responsibility, the purpose being to review candidate progress and achievement in relation to where they are within the assessment process. Effective contact should provide the necessary opportunities to help candidates understand the evidence required for assessments including advice / support on the gathering and / or production of assessment evidence. Contact should allow for assessment plans to be adjusted / revised in order to ensure that the next stages in assessment remain clear. You should document the processes you will have in place for ensuring that candidates have regular contact with their assessors.

Qualification approval criteria: Category 4: Internal Assessment and Verification

You must provide evidence of the systems, policies and procedures which will ensure all assessment decisions will be consistent with qualification standards. You must also describe how you will maintain records of the internal verification process.

Criterion 4.2: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Internal assessment and verification procedures

You must provide:

- The records you will use to show implementation of your centre's assessment and internal verification policies and procedures. These must include your intended:
  - Assessment recording materials, and shell portfolios (if applicable)
  - Internal verification records / forms covering the three stages of IV (refer to the HNVQ Internal Verifications Toolkit)
  - Standardisation templates / forms to record standardisation discussions / activities (such as standardisation meeting template, decision log, IV record).

Why is this criterion important?

To ensure the validity and integrity of the qualifications offered by Qualifications Scotland, it is important that assessment judgements are standardised.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Your assessors and verifiers must apply your centre's assessment and verification procedures consistently, in full and effectively.

Assessment and internal verification arrangements must be suitable for the types of qualifications being assessed and internally verified.

Assessment and Internal verification policies and procedures must be documented, and you must use suitable forms to recording assessment and internal verification activities.

Criterion 4.3: Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Internal assessment and verification methods

You must provide:

For SVQ / Vocational qualifications:

- Exemplar assessment materials which have been internally verified (at before assessment stage). Assessment materials can be centre-devised or Qualifications Scotland-devised. These could include:
    - Observation checklists
    - Knowledge questions
    - Other, centre-devised assessment instruments.

For Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications and HN Units:

- Assessment materials for a minimum of six units. Or for all units if less than six are being approved. These can be centre-devised or Qualifications Scotland-devised.

Why is this criterion important?

To ensure that our qualifications are credible, and that they provide nationally and internationally recognised standards of attainment all assessment methods must meet our principles of assessment.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Assessment materials

Assessment materials need to measure candidate knowledge and skills, and can come in the form of case studies, assignments, questions and answers, and observation checklists. Please see Qualifications Scotland's Guide to Assessment for specific details for the qualifications you wish to offer.

As well as centre-devised assessment materials, materials can also be purchased from a third party — for example, an off-the-shelf electronic portfolio system with built-in question banks for SVQs.

Qualifications Scotland exemplar assessment instruments are also available for many Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications and HN Units. You can choose to use these if you wish, but they must still be subject to internal verification.

We recommend referring to Qualifications Scotland's Guide to Assessment if you are developing your own materials. This publication covers instruments / methods of assessment and the benefits of adopting a holistic / integrated approach when planning assessments.

If using Qualifications Scotland assessment exemplars, you must ensure that they are used in a context appropriate to the delivery of the unit and to the group award of which it forms a part.

Although the content of an exemplar has been prior verified by Qualifications Scotland, using it does not automatically guarantee successful qualification verification / approval. It is still your responsibility to make sure that all the appropriate internal quality assurance procedures are satisfactorily completed at the approval stage.

Internal verification

All assessment materials — regardless of origin, whether they are devised by Qualifications Scotland, a centre or a third party — must be subject to internal verification to help ensure validity and reliability in assessment.

Seeking subject expert advice

For Qualifications Scotland Advanced Qualifications and HNs, if you are currently an approved centre and your assessment materials are centre-devised and not yet prior verified, we advise that you submit a request for this to be done by Qualifications Scotland. You can do this at any time by forwarding your request along with the assessment materials to our Quality Assurance Logistics team, who will provide feedback from a subject expert.

For all qualifications, if you are not currently an approved centre and you would like technical advice in relation to the units / awards you wish to offer, you should get in touch with your Business Development / International team contact.

Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under Qualifications Scotland's required conditions.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Candidate assessment evidence

You must provide:

- The records you will use to show the implementation of your centre's policies / procedures on malpractice, including authenticity. This may include one or more of the following:
  - Malpractice policy / procedure recording forms
  - Portfolio disclaimers (available to download from Qualifications Scotland's website)
  - Plagiarism software such as Turn-It-In to confirm authenticity
  - Invigilation check confirming the conditions of assessment (supervised, invigilated, open and closed book) will be met
  - A direct observation recording sheet / record to be used in the natural work environment
  - Assessment / internal verification records

- Identity check sheet / record

Why is this criterion important?

Determining the authenticity of each candidate's work is of prime importance in ensuring the integrity of their achievement.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Your centre must ensure that the evidence on which the assessment decision is made solely belongs to the candidate being assessed. Assessors can only make accurate assessment decisions when this is the case.

Criterion 4.6: Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against Qualifications Scotland's requirements.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Assessment of evidence

You must provide:

- An explanation of how you will ensure:
  - there is a common interpretation of evidence requirements and standards
  - consistency in assessment decision-making
  - a standardised approach to assessment (all assessors / IVs following the same policies / procedures / documentation).

Your explanation should cover the three points above and you must make reference to the associated mechanisms / records you will use to support your assessors in making accurate and consistent judgements. These records are likely to include those already covered in the other criteria such as:

- specific assessment and IV records
- standardisation / course meetings
- decision logs, etc

Why is this criterion important?

Accuracy and consistency in making assessment judgements not only ensures integrity in Qualifications Scotland qualifications but helps ensure that final assessment decisions made and communicated to candidates are fair.

It is important to note that when an assessor or internal verifier is unqualified, their assessment decisions must be countersigned by a qualified assessor or internal verifier.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Standardisation arrangements

Standardisation activities and meetings can help support assessors at all stages of the assessment process and reinforce the principles of reliability, consistency and fairness in assessment. At the outset, agreeing instruments of assessment and assessment materials helps ensure validity in assessment — and that all staff are working with the same materials.

During assessment, periodic standardisation activities / meetings can support assessors and verifiers in making accurate and consistent judgements, by tuning each assessor / verifier into the others' understanding of the unit requirements, helping identify any 'grey areas'.

Face-to-face meetings remain the most common mechanism for standardisation, but other methods can achieve interactive standardisation; for example, the use of discussion forums, email exchange, webinars, tele / video conferencing.

Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with Qualifications Scotland requirements.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Evidence retention

You must provide:

- A description of the arrangements you have in place to ensure that your centre's documented evidence retention arrangements are shared with and understood by all assessors and internal verifiers.

Why is this criterion important?

Candidate assessment evidence must be retained by centres for defined periods for internal and external verification, and in case of any resulting queries, internal assessment appeals or suspected malpractice.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Retention of candidate evidence

You must retain all candidate evidence in line with the timescales set out in the Qualifications Scotland Evidence Retention Requirements Table

This requirement provides qualification verifiers with an opportunity to sample the optimum amount of evidence during a centre visit. Sampling will focus on current 'live' candidate evidence but may also include some past completed assessment evidence.

Criterion 4.9: Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.

What evidence do I need to provide?

Sharing QV feedback

You must provide:

- A description of the arrangements you have in place to ensure Qualifications Scotland Qualification Verification feedback / reports are shared with assessors and internal verifiers to inform assessment practice
- A description of the arrangements you have in place to ensure any action points, given as a result of Qualification Verification are monitored against agreed timescales.

Why is this criterion important?

If the results of qualification verification are made known to all relevant centre staff, this helps affirm what the centre is doing well as well as highlighting areas for improvement.

Qualifications Scotland requirements

Qualifications Scotland requires centres to share feedback from qualification verifiers with all relevant assessors and internal verifiers. Feedback must be discussed, and any recommendations should be used to develop assessment practice.

Completing the form section 7: E-Assessment

Please indicate if your centre requires access to a Qualifications Scotland e-assessment system for this qualification.

Completing the form Section 8: Declaration

Please accept and date the declaration regarding accuracy of your application.

Submitting your application form

Your completed application form should be sent by email to approvalapplications@qualifications.gov.scot

Please attach all relevant supporting documents to the same email.

Appendix: Guidance on managing assessment conditions

Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate's own work, generated under Qualifications Scotland's required conditions.

Always follow the assessment conditions outlined in the Qualifications Scotland guidance.

Specific qualification arrangements or conditions may be included in:

- unit specifications
- arrangements documents
- group award strategy documents

Roles and responsibilities for assessment conditions

If your centre is approved to deliver one or more qualifications that include specific assessment conditions, the roles and responsibilities of invigilators / supervisors must be clearly documented, disseminated and understood.

Roles and responsibilities should include:

Invigilator / supervisor

Responsibilities for managing assessment conditions:

- Ensure that the centre has carried out the necessary identity / security checks at the commencement of the course and prior to the examinations.
- Ensure that each candidate knows which assessment is to be taken, and that this accords with the centre's own records.
- Check to see if any candidates are to be permitted to take the assessment under the special provisions for people with particular educational requirements.
- Ensure that the seating in the examination room is arranged in such a way that there is no possibility of collusion or interference.
- Ensure they can see all of the candidates at all times during the examination.
- Ensure that all displays of material that may be of assistance to candidates in answering questions are removed.
- Ensure that candidates cannot access applications that may be of assistance to them in answering questions / generating evidence.

- Where appropriate, ensure that the status of the internet connection is sufficient to allow candidates to access online assessments.

Check the identity of candidates

If the candidates are not known to the invigilator or supervisor, you must make sufficient identity and security checks before the examination or assessment to ensure the candidate is who they say they are:

- You must ensure that candidate identity is checked against one of the following forms of photographic identification:
  - photo card driving licence
  - valid passport
  - valid identity card from within the EU
  - military identity card
  - government identity card
  - Security Industry Authority card
  - Other forms of identification (such as PASS card, or Young Scot card) may be considered.
- Candidates must be informed within their joining instructions that they must bring a permitted form of identification.
- A copy of the identification documentation must be retained for six months after the candidate's completion date.

Invigilation of assessments

If there is a need for invigilation, your centre must appoint someone to undertake the role of invigilator.

Any assessment which is undertaken in invigilated conditions should be carried out in silence by candidates working individually.

The invigilator must:

- not be involved in the teaching of the unit
- be trained to ensure the assessment is carried out in accordance with the specified instructions.

For invigilated paper-based examinations the environment must:

- have appropriate levels of heat, light, ventilation and noise control
- have a level floor

- be without galleries
- have no displays of material that may be of assistance to candidates in answering questions
- have sufficient single desks or tables and chairs for the number of candidates stated
- have consecutively numbered seats / desks (a record must be kept of this arrangement of numbers and retained for six months)
- be organised in such a way that the invigilator can see all of the candidates at all times during the examination
- be arranged in such a way that there is no possibility of collusion or interference (where practical, candidates should be at single desks with 1.25 metres between heads)
- have a means provided to allow the invigilator to summon assistance
- have a working clock, which is clearly visible to all candidates
- have supervised access to toilet facilities for male, female and disabled candidates

Supervision of assessments

Supervision is the oversight of an internal assessment being undertaken by candidates which ensures that the work is authentically their own.

You may appoint staff who have been involved in the teaching of the unit may to act as supervisors, but they must not interfere or offer guidance on the ongoing assessment. In some subjects, candidates may require to move around the room and / or access materials. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that these activities do not permit collusion or cheating by candidates.

For supervised paper-based / practical assessments, the environment must:

- have appropriate levels of heat, light, ventilation and noise control
- have a level floor
- be without galleries
- have no displays of material that may be of assistance to candidates in answering questions / generating evidence
- have sufficient single desks or tables and chairs for the number of candidates stated
- be organised in such a way that the invigilator can see all of the candidates at all times during the assessment
- be arranged in such a way that there is no possibility of collusion or interference (where practical, candidates should be at single desks with 1.25 metres between heads)
- be suitably equipped for all candidates taking practical tests
- have a means provided to allow the supervisor to summon assistance
- have a working clock, which is clearly visible to all candidates
- have supervised access to toilet facilities for male, female and disabled candidates

Digital assessments

For invigilated or supervised digital examinations / assessments the environment must:

- have appropriate levels of heat, light, ventilation and noise control
- have a level floor
- be without galleries
- have no displays of material that may be of assistance to candidates in answering questions / generating evidence
- prevent candidates from accessing applications that may be of assistance to them in answering questions / generating evidence
- have sufficient single desks or tables and chairs for the number of candidates stated
- have consecutively numbered seats / desks (a record must be kept of this arrangement of numbers and retained for six months after the candidate's completion date)
- be organised in such a way that the invigilator can see all of the candidates at all times during the examination
- be arranged in such a way that there is no possibility of collusion or interference (where practical, candidates should be at single desks with 1.25 metres between heads)
- be suitably equipped for all candidates taking practical tests
- have a means provided to allow the invigilator / supervisor to summon assistance
- have a working on-screen clock, which is clearly visible to candidates
- have access to toilet facilities for male, female and disabled candidates
- have sufficient numbers of technical devices for candidate use, including spare devices in case of hardware failure

For remotely invigilated or supervised digital examinations or assessments, the environment must:

- have appropriate levels of heat, light, ventilation and noise control
- have a level floor
- be without galleries
- have no displays of material that may be of assistance to candidates in answering questions / generating evidence
- prevent candidates from accessing applications that may be of assistance to them in answering questions / generating evidence
- have sufficient single desks or tables and chairs for the number of candidates stated
- have consecutively numbered seats / desks (a record must be kept of this arrangement of numbers and retained for six months after the candidate's completion date)
- be organised in such a way that the invigilator can see all of the candidates at all times during the examination (The invigilator / supervisor must be able to see each candidate's head, eyes, torso, keyboard and mouse. This means that it is unlikely that candidates will be able to access toilet facilities for the duration of the examination or assessment.)

- be organised in such a way that the invigilator can detect noises made within the candidate's assessment environment at all times during the examination
- be arranged in such a way that there is no possibility of collusion or interference (where practical, candidates should be at single desks with 1.25 metres between heads)
- be suitably equipped for all candidates taking practical tests
- have a means provided to allow the invigilator / supervisor to summon assistance
- have a working on-screen clock, which is clearly visible to candidates

More information on assessing Qualifications Scotland qualifications can be found in the Guide to Assessment.