

SQA-SCS joint statement on Alternative Venue service

In May 2024 SQA announced that it was updating its guidance for its Alternative Venue process. This confirmed that learners representing their country in a sporting event need to provide a letter from the relevant national governing body to confirm they've been selected for a representative national team. This update to the guidance followed consultation with schools whose learners used the alternative venue process in previous years. In September 2024 SQA published the finalised guidance.

SQA advised that travel and accommodation should only be booked after requests have been approved by them. There is no guarantee that learners will be able sit exams at an alternative venue unless approval has been given.

The Alternative Venue service is designed to support learners who, in exceptional circumstances, cannot sit exams within their school, college or training provider (known as SQA centres). In a sporting context, the service is only available to learners who are representing their country and have been designated as such by the relevant national governing body.

Only schools, colleges or training providers (as registered SQA centres) can submit requests for the alternative venue service. Before they do so, they must be satisfied that all requirements for use of the service are met.

In the context of Cheer Sport competitions, SQA has engaged with Sport Cheer Scotland (SCS), and understand that SCS select a national representative team for the following competitions:

- ICU World Championships: 24 April – 26 April
- ICC World Cup: 28 April – 29 April

Learners, or their representatives, can contact SCS for a letter if they have been selected for the national team at these events and will be unable to attend an exam as result. The SQA exam timetable in 2025 starts on Monday 28 April.