



Customer case study



A new direction for the IoD

The Institute of Directors

The Institute of Directors (IoD) is a membership body for company directors and has been supporting businesses and the people who run them since 1903. The organisation operates from a prestigious building on Pall Mall (central London) supporting 34,500 members through 48 regional branches across the UK allowing them to have a voice locally and nationally. Members benefit from IoD policy voice, which represents the views of members, as well as access to legal help and topical learning.

The Professional Development area of the IoD offers a variety of courses to aspiring and practising directors, both executive and non-executive. The IoD awards qualifications associated with some of its courses, under its Royal Charter. These are specifically the Certificate and Diploma in Company Direction.

On completion of the above qualifications, experienced directors become eligible to apply for Chartered Director status.

The IoD exams team is small, but highly focussed on enhancing the value of its qualifications as well as their overall quality. The organisation has also made significant advances in improving the accessibility of its qualifications through the adoption of CBT and specifically through the early adoption of remote invigilation.



As an independent association of business leaders, the IoD aims to make sure members' views are taken into account when the government is reviewing policy, legislation or seeking the opinions of the wider business community.

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The Challenge

The IoD were faced with a number of challenges to ensure the membership body continued to deliver high level examinations and professional standards. Firstly, there was the challenge of constructing a workable Exemptions Policy. In order to make sensible judgements about exemptions the membership body required to know the levels of its qualifications and be able to verify this to members. SQA's Credit Rating service was the perfect solution to overcome this challenge. The service provided a clear understanding to the business and customers about each of the 6 credit rated qualifications.

In addition, at this time, the IoD was going through a period of rapid change and wanted to be able to assure its members and stakeholders that these changes were right for the membership body. This was achieved through working with SQA as a reputable external regulator. While this partnership was not compulsory, the IoD knew the knowledge, experience and independence SQA provided was invaluable to the business. Working with SQA meant that the IoD received external advice and verification that intended changes would enhance quality. As an early adopter of Remote Invigilation, IoD worked with SQA to ensure that qualifications examined by remote invigilation were granted credit rating.

The Response

SQA's credit rating service has allowed the IoD to highlight how much the membership body value external recognition. As a chartered body the IoD has authority to award qualifications. SQA credit rating has provided translatability and benchmarking against both the SQA and other recognised credit framework. As the Diploma in Company Direction is a level 11 qualification, the IoD have been able to make an amendment to the eligibility criteria for Chartered Director status to enable candidates to apply earlier.

Working collaboratively with SQA has allowed the IoD to learn more about its qualifications through the process itself and this learning has triggered further changes which will be implemented in the future.

Teresa Jacobs, Head of Examinations and Professional Standards said ***"On a personal level I have enjoyed the reassurance of having created or re-engineered qualifications that are externally recognised. Utilising SQA's vast expertise and knowledge allowed us to continue to evaluate and improve our processes, for example; we are about to launch assignment based assessment for one of our credit rated qualifications because it emerged through the process that this would be a credible alternative"***.

The Accreditations and Standards Committee, the key overseeing body, with delegation from the IoD Board and Council, for the overall quality and reputation of the IoD, has requested that all IoD future qualifications go through credit rating.

This decision is testament to the quality and validity of this service offered by SQA.

"There are probably not many organisations like The IoD, but I would recommend any Chartered Awarding Body which is not regulated by OFQUAL to apply for credit rating. The process is very open and transparent. The paperwork is thorough but accessible. Working with SQA feels more like a partnership than going through regulation".

Teresa Jacobs,
Head of Examinations
and Professional
Standards

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The Future

The value of credit rating to the IoD was recognised in a communication by the Managing Director to all staff and in an article by Teresa Jacobs in the Director magazine distributed to all members.

The IoD are currently working on new initiatives and are in dialogue with SQA to evolve these considerations, as it continues its stringent commitment to continued quality and approval.

About SQA

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is an international leader in education and training; we provide solutions for organisations to achieve the high standards needed in today's training and learning market.

With over 100 years' experience in educational support, we help organisations to realise their potential and achieve their ambitions.

Our expertise continues to help organisations and industries to thrive; our customers include leading employers, professional bodies and government departments.

SQA can work collaboratively with you to find the perfect solution for your organisation, Our services include consultancy, professional standards, quality assurance, assessment, marking, resulting and certification and our customised awards service.

Experts in specialist educational support, we are renowned for our quality and customer service.

Find out more

To find out more about how SQA can help your organisation reach its potential please contact:

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