



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority

---

# **Report on recognising organisations as awarding bodies**

*The recognition process*

---

February 2008

QCA/08/3569

## Contents

The recognition process .....	3
Background .....	3
Current recognition process .....	3
Reducing the bureaucracy of qualification accreditation.....	4
Banking documents.....	4
The recognition of employers and providers as awarding bodies .....	4
Key issues in recognition .....	6
Implications of the Education and Skills Bill 2007 for future awarding organisations’ recognition.....	7
Annex 1: List of awarding body banking documents required by QCA.....	9
Annex 2: Requirements for recognition as an awarding organisation .....	11
Annex 3: Awarding body recognition application form.....	13

## The recognition process

### Background

*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (2004) defines an awarding body as ‘an organisation or consortium that awards qualifications’. The document states: ‘To be eligible to award accredited qualifications, awarding bodies must meet the requirements of the regulatory authorities.’

The regulators of external qualifications for England (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority; QCA), Wales (Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills; DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment; CCEA) have a statutory duty to accredit qualifications. When the regulators produced the first regulatory criteria in 1998/9, they decided to split the accreditation process into part A, the recognition of awarding bodies, and part B, the accreditation of individual qualifications.

Following QCA's 2002 Quinquennial Review, which criticised the detailed examination of every qualification submitted for accreditation, there has been a move towards ever-more strategic regulation of awarding bodies and, as a result, a decline in regulation of the detail of individual qualifications.

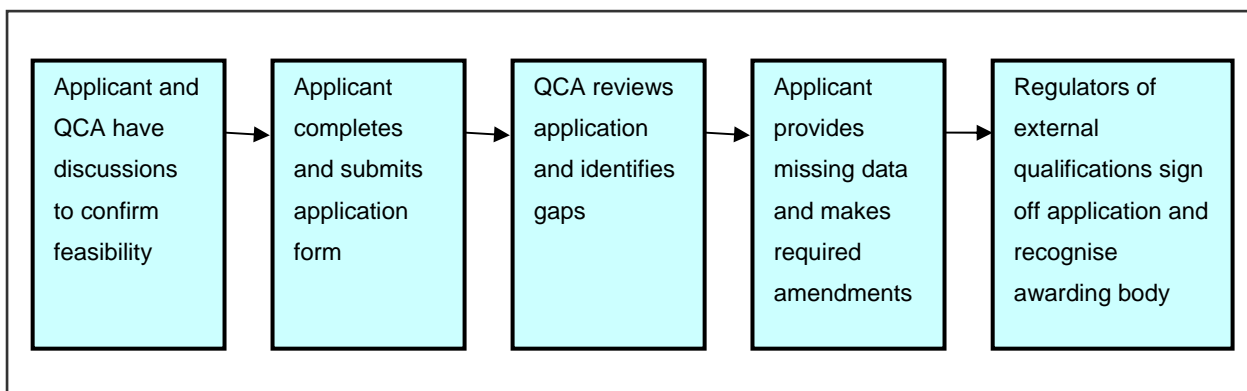
### Current recognition process

The process to gain recognition as an awarding body has remained largely unchanged since its introduction in 2000. Following early dialogue to establish the feasibility of an application, organisations must demonstrate, through supporting documentary evidence, how they meet the regulatory requirements as set out in *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (2004). The regulators review each application and provide feedback to the applicant, identifying any gaps and problem areas. The organisation must then provide the missing evidence and/or adapt their systems and processes as necessary. This is an iterative process that can take several re-submissions.

Once the organisation has provided all the necessary information, the application is presented to a committee of QCA, DCELLS and CCEA regulatory staff, which makes a decision on recognition. In some cases, the committee grants recognition with conditions attached (only lesser requirements may be made conditions), although this is avoided where possible.

Completion of this process can take applicants from six months to three years. The average is approximately 10 months. Many organisations do not get beyond the early dialogue stage and the regulators only recognise a few new awarding bodies each year. The chart below summarises the recognition process:

**Figure 1**



### **Reducing the bureaucracy of qualification accreditation**

As part of the move towards reducing the bureaucracy of the qualification accreditation process, in 2005 the regulators of external qualifications introduced an additional recognition process that evaluated awarding bodies' qualifications development systems. If these proved adequate, the awarding body was given access to a streamlined accreditation process, which became known as 'five-day accreditation'. When the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) tests and trials were started, the regulators agreed that in the absence of specific criteria for the operation of this framework, awarding bodies would be given access as long as they were part-A recognised and were at least working towards five-day recognition.

### **Banking documents**

In an effort to standardise the information collected from awarding bodies, the regulators instigated a system of 'banking documents'. There are 11 part-A banking documents and a further seven for five-day accreditation (see Annex 1 for the list). QCA collects these documents as part of the recognition processes or, if necessary, they are collected post-recognition under the conditions attached.

### **The recognition of employers and providers as awarding bodies**

In summer 2007 the administrations of England, Wales and Northern Ireland indicated their willingness to use the forthcoming Education and Skills Bill to provide the regulators in those countries with a formal (statutory) function to recognise organisations, giving

them the power to award or authenticate qualifications. On behalf of all three regulators, QCA undertook an informal consultation on the proposals. Feedback was largely positive and the Government subsequently incorporated these powers into the Education and Skills Bill 2007.

At the same time the Qualifications and Skills division of QCA was engaging employers and providers in the Employer and Provider Recognition pilot. This pilot aimed to bring employers' and providers' training and qualifications into the QCF. The first step in the process was a consultation survey conducted by PriceWaterhouseCooper on QCA's behalf. Organisations that responded to the survey were asked if they would be interested in participating in the pilot. QCA contacted any organisations that expressed an interest in participation to discuss the pilot in more detail. QCA issued approximately 480 invitations to events at which employers and providers received more information.

As a result three organisations, McDonalds, Flybe and Network Rail, expressed an interest in being recognised as awarding organisations. QCA worked with these organisations with the aim of recognising them as awarding organisations by Christmas 2007.

Existing processes for awarding body recognition were designed for organisations already established (who were predominantly awarding bodies that award qualifications). They were not designed for use with organisations with a predominantly training function that wanted to become awarding organisations.

QCA was determined not to create a two-tier approach and to ensure that any new organisations seeking awarding body status should demonstrate the same high standards as current awarding bodies in terms of governance, management and quality assurance. If an organisation could not meet those high standards then the regulators would not recognise it.

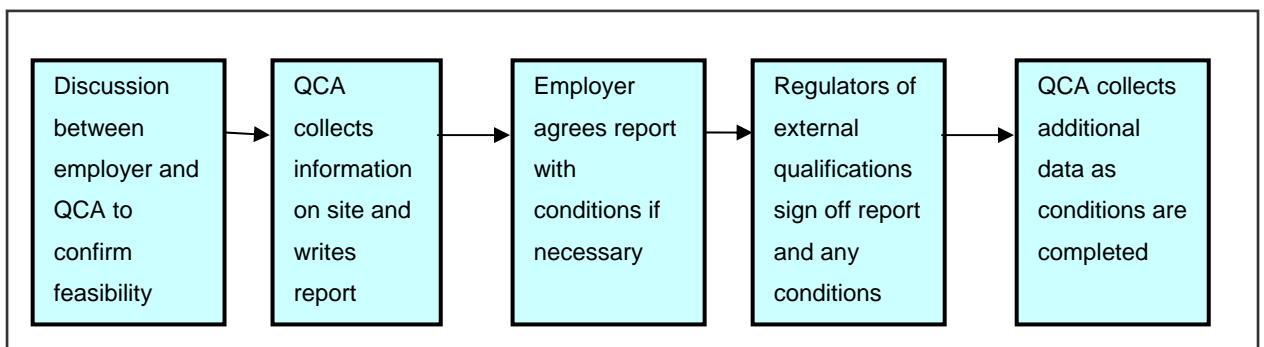
In light of these aims, QCA decided to adopt a more streamlined approach similar to that used in the monitoring of awarding bodies. QCA provided each employer with a summary document of requirements (see Annex 2), which they discussed with the employer at an early meeting. Once the employer was clear about the information required, QCA organised a longer meeting at the employer's premises to collect the required evidence against the regulatory criteria (the form used to collect this information is in Annex 3). The employer provided some of this evidence verbally and some through documented material.

QCA used the evidence gathered to produce a report that detailed how and where the applicant met the regulatory criteria and summarised where and why they did not. Where possible, employers met any gaps in requirements prior to recognition. In some cases QCA required additional evidence and identified this as a condition of recognition. QCA required that the employer provided all the banking documents, some during the recognition process and others later.

This process took approximately three months to complete, compared with the previous average time of 10 months. Going forward, the process for all organisations seeking recognition will be based on this streamlined model.

This recognition process is summarised below:

**Figure 2**



## Key issues in recognition

The recognition of employers led the regulators to identify the essential conditions that an organisation must fulfil prior to recognition. These are:

- the separation of training or other related activities such as publication from the awarding of qualifications to avoid any conflict of interest
- the provision of key policies and procedures designed to support candidates through their qualifications, including equal opportunities, appeals and malpractice procedures
- sufficient staff and resources to support qualification development and awarding
- a level of independence that fulfils the requirements for the qualifications to be external as defined by the 1997 Education Act. For these purposes an external

qualification is one which is awarded or authenticated by an outside body; that is, a body or person other than the institution or employer that provides the course of education and training leading to the qualification.

This last requirement was the most difficult for employers to satisfy. However, the regulators felt able to grant recognition following detailed discussions, and in some cases changes to the employers' operations, which established the required level of independence for external authentication. For example, in some cases – particularly in the transport industry where providers of public transport have to meet stringent requirements – the organisations' own regulatory body became the external authenticator. In other cases, the awarding function was separated from the organisation creating a system of reporting to an independent committee of the board. This latter model was already in use within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), with some chartered institutes that have membership, publications and training arms.

### **Implications of the Education and Skills Bill 2007 for future awarding organisations' recognition**

The Employer and Provider Recognition pilot gave QCA the opportunity to test out a revised process for recognising awarding bodies without compromising the high standards required of current awarding bodies. QCA has reviewed and amended the process so that all potential awarding organisations can use them. QCA proposes to implement the amended process to facilitate any extra demand for recognising organisations as a result of the enactment of the 2007 Education and Skills Bill.

The process will be as follows:

1. QCA will provide opportunities for organisations that get in touch to attend an information session, at which QCA will explain the requirements and options for having their qualifications accredited. QCA will give information on becoming a recognised body, working with an existing awarding body or submitting their units to the QCF. This will allow organisations to make an informed early decision.
2. The regulators will ask organisations that wish to move forward with recognition to sign a commitment that says they can provide evidence to show that:
  - They have a market within England, Wales and Northern Ireland and are not seeking recognition purely to operate overseas.

- They can manage any potential conflicts of interest with other activities such as the provision of training courses or publications.
  - They can demonstrate sufficient separation of activities to ensure that their qualifications are 'external' according to the terms specified in the 1997 Education Act.
3. Once the organisation makes this commitment, it will receive full information on the recognition process and the evidence requirements. If necessary, QCA will arrange a meeting to explain this process further.
  4. The organisation will complete the awarding body recognition application form. There will be options for organisations either to collect the evidence themselves and submit it to QCA for review or for regulatory staff to support the review of available evidence and the completion of the form. All awarding organisations will be expected to operate within the QCF.
  5. For any areas of non-compliance the regulators will set conditions of recognition. This will be a particularly important feature of the amended legislation because the regulators are currently only legally able to set conditions of accreditation. The organisation will have to meet these conditions before the accreditation of qualifications.
  6. The regulators are looking at extending their web-based facilities to include the recognition of awarding organisations as well as the accreditation of qualifications. This will streamline the recognition process. It will also allow the secure capture and storage of the extra documentation that may be generated through more bodies seeking recognition.



## **Annex 1. List of awarding body banking documents required by QCA**

Note to applicants: please make sure that the documents submitted for banking are discrete, stand-alone files. Include your awarding body acronym in the title of each document and insert the file name of the banking document in the header or footer of the document.

### **Part A documents**

- list of partnership/franchising/licensing agreements
- organisation chart
- details of committee structures
- person specifications and job roles for key members of staff
- equality of opportunity policy
- reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy and procedures
- customer service statement
- sample certificate designs
- malpractice procedures
- enquiries and appeals policy and procedure
- position statement on the use of Welsh and Gaelic.

### **Five-day accreditation documents**

- flowchart detailing market research process
- identification of demand / development of rationale for a qualification development – terms of reference of groups/committees
- flowchart showing the stages of the qualification development process
- flowchart or procedure document for each assessment method used showing the stages in the development process for that assessment

- assessment arrangements – handbooks supplied to assessors and centres
- flowchart illustrating the number and type of teams/posts involved in the quality assurance process
- procedure to ensure continued compliance with the regulators' criteria on qualification development.

## **Annex 2. Requirements for recognition as an awarding organisation**

The following information summarises the information that QCA needs to recognise organisations as awarding bodies. This document is designed as an aid for meetings between QCA and organisations.

### **1. Background information**

In terms of qualifications, how does the organisation:

- develop
- administer
- assess
- award?

### **2. Organisation, resources and expertise**

How is the organisation set up to carry out these activities? In particular, QCA needs:

- an organisation chart
- a named point of accountability
- responsibilities and expertise of those involved (for example via job descriptions or person specifications)
- information on how the organisation offers qualifications across different sites, including standardisation and monitoring, to ensure assessments are valid, reliable and authentic to prevent malpractice
- information on employee access to qualifications and fair assessment in relation to equality of opportunity legislation
- information on the organisation's system for ensuring the security of certificate issue
- process of self-assessment or business evaluation that includes qualifications.

### **3. Quality assurance**

How does the organisation ensure that there is separation of interests, independent review or authentication of its qualifications at all stages, including:

- development
- assessment
- awarding (grading)?

How does the organisation ensure that if an appeal calls into question the accuracy of other results, the integrity of the qualification is protected?

### **4. Other evidence required**

This includes:

- information given to employees on the quality of service regarding their training and assessment, including any appeals policy in place for candidates
- if the organisation has candidates based in Wales or Northern Ireland, a copy of a policy on assessment in Welsh or Gaelic.

## **Annex 3. Awarding body recognition application form**

### **Background information**

#### **Notes for applicants**

All applicant organisations should read this section.

This application form is to be used to record responses and evidence from organisations wishing to become awarding bodies recognised by the regulators of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Either the applicant organisation or representatives of the regulators can complete this document.

A person independent of the regulatory team involved in the recognition application process will review this form, and the organisation seeking recognition will sign off the form to confirm that it is a fair representation of its systems and procedures. Completion of the bottom box on the first page of the form (sign-off by applicant organisation) also signals the organisation's agreement to any conditions recorded on the final page.

All criteria references are to *The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2004)*.

#### **Possible requirements under the Freedom of Information Act**

Please note that the material provided by organisations as part of the application process for awarding body recognition will be handled in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Data Protection Act. Organisations should be aware of the duties on the regulators of external qualifications under the Freedom of Information Act to disclose information that they hold in response to requests from individuals. Organisations must provide reasonable and timely cooperation to the regulators to enable them to determine, within the timescales for compliance with the Act, whether consent can be obtained to disclosure and/or whether any exemption to disclosure applies.

Where organisations consider that material they are providing to the regulators is commercially or otherwise confidential, this should be clearly stated at the time it is provided, together with the reasons for that view. If the regulators agree that the material is confidential in character, they will not include that information in a published report and may seek to apply the relevant exemption(s) under the Freedom of Information Act to any

request from a third party for disclosure of the material, unless the organisation consents to the disclosure. Organisations should be aware of the fact that the regulators may ultimately be required to comply with the determinations of the information commissioner and the courts as to disclosure of information notwithstanding any view as to confidentiality which is agreed with the organisation.

Therefore, please clearly indicate if any aspects of the information provided as part of this proposal are commercially or otherwise confidential and if so your rationale to support this view. The rationale will be reviewed in light of any requests received to disclose information and the regulators will, wherever possible, provide prior notification should they consider the need to disclose any of this information.

### **Conditions of recognition**

In addition to the evidence-based evaluation, by agreeing to the completed document on the first page of the form, the applicant organisation agrees to the following ongoing conditions of any recognition.

- We will inform the regulators immediately of any proposed change in the following where it relates to the awarding of qualifications:
  - i) ownership of the organisation
  - ii) any existing partnership, licensing or franchising arrangements
  - iii) the corporate or governance structure
  - iv) the legal identity.
- In doing so, we will provide the regulators with such evidence as they may reasonably require to determine whether any such changed arrangements meet the criteria.
- We will comply with any subsequent conditions of accreditation imposed by the regulators.
- We will make a new submission for recognition as an awarding body if required to do so by the regulators.

*(Criteria para 6)*

- We agree to give the regulators, in confidence, information and supporting evidence regarding its policy and arrangements for setting fees for accredited qualifications and the authentication of accredited qualifications.

*(Criteria para 7)*

- We agree to supply the regulators with data on request, including that relating to the use of reasonable adjustments and special consideration and appeals against assessment and other decisions.

*(Criteria paras 12, 20, 27)*

- We agree to conduct a full investigation of instances of alleged or suspected malpractice and to take such action, with respect to the candidates and assessment sites concerned, as is necessary to maintain the integrity of the qualification. The actions taken will be commensurate with the gravity of the malpractice. We also agree to report cases of malpractice to the regulators whenever we find evidence that certificates may be invalid. We will cooperate with any follow-up investigations of malpractice required by the regulators. We will agree with the regulators on appropriate remedial action if there is evidence that certificates may be invalid.

*(Criteria paras 30, 31)*

- We confirm that, if certificates for accredited qualifications that carry the relevant regulators' logos are awarded to candidates outside England, Wales and Northern Ireland, they will be offered to the exact specification accredited for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and we will inform candidates that the regulators' logos on the certificate indicate that the qualification is accredited only for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

*(Criteria para 21)*

- We will submit self-assessment reports to the regulators to an agreed timetable, and will allow the regulators access to premises, meetings, documents and data.

*(Criteria para 11f, 37)*

**Early dialogue**

Please record details of early dialogue discussions with the regulators, sector skills council or other interested parties.

--

**Plan of provision (*Criteria para 1*)**

Please complete the boxes below to show information about the qualifications you propose to submit for accreditation once recognised.

Level	Qualification type	Sector/ subject area	Indication of proposed qualification title	Rationale



## Application form

Awarding body recognition application form	
Organisation	
Abbreviation	
Address	
Main phone number	
Fax number	
Email address	
Website address	
Contact name and job title	
Contact phone number	
Contact email address	
Form completed by	
Form reviewed by	
Final form agreed on behalf of applicant organisation	Name  Date

## Organisation, resources and expertise

How is the organisation set up to carry out the development, administration, assessment and awarding of its qualifications?

### Corporate governance

Are corporate governance arrangements in place, including robust and transparent governance, organisation and management? (*Criteria para 5a*)

Documents required:

- organisation chart including committee structures and responsibilities if applicable
- person specifications and job descriptions for key members of staff.

Response

Is there a single, named point of accountability for maintaining the quality and standards of all qualifications? (*Criteria para 5b*)

Response

Are qualifications to be offered in a partnership with other awarding bodies or franchised or licensed to other organisations? Yes/No (*Criteria paras 5c, 5e*)

If yes, provide a written statement of each organisation's partnership responsibilities, including identification of a lead organisation to manage quality assurance, and a guarantee that franchised or licensed organisations will comply with the regulatory criteria.

Response

Show how there is a clear distinction between the awarding body function and other functions, for example training or publishing, undertaken by the organisation to manage any potential conflicts of interest.

Response

<p>Show that there are sufficient financial, technical and staffing resources to support the qualifications. (<i>Criteria para 8</i>)</p>
<p>Response</p>
<p>Detail procedures that ensure staff and others involved are competent in and/or have access to appropriate guidance and training on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• design and development of qualifications (<i>Criteria para 10a</i>)</li> <li>• assessment and awarding procedures (<i>Criteria para 10b</i>)</li> <li>• subject matter of the qualification (<i>Criteria para 10c</i>)</li> <li>• languages used for assessment (<i>Criteria para 10d</i>)</li> <li>• systems used to ensure consistency of standards across options, centres and time (<i>Criteria para 10e</i>)</li> <li>• supporting equality of opportunity. (<i>Criteria para 10f</i>)</li> </ul>
<p>Response</p>

**Delivery across different sites**

<p>For any site where assessment takes place, show that there are procedures in place to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a named point of accountability for the quality assurance and management of the qualifications. (<i>Criteria para 11a</i>)</li> <li>• There are resources and systems necessary to support the qualifications. (<i>Criteria para 11b</i>)</li> <li>• Buildings used for assessment purposes provide access for all candidates, in accordance with relevant legislation. (<i>Criteria para 11c</i>)</li> <li>• Staff and/or associates have the necessary competence in the subject matter of the qualifications, assessment procedures and language(s) used for assessment and there are systems that ensure the consistency of standards and support equality of opportunity. (<i>Criteria para 11d</i>)</li> </ul>
Response
<p>If assessment takes place on a site which operates in a partnership arrangement between organisations, provide documents showing the respective role, responsibilities, and accountabilities of each partner, with clear lines of communication between the partners. (<i>Criteria para 11e</i>)</p>
Response
<p>Provide information on the data that is collected on candidates, qualifications and the site at which they were assessed for central monitoring purposes. (<i>Criteria para 12</i>)</p>
Response
<p>Detail procedures for the retention of sufficient evidence of candidates' work or assessment decisions to monitor provision over time. (<i>Criteria para 13</i>)</p>
Response

Detail procedures for dealing with malpractice on the part of candidates, assessors or others involved in the qualification, including the requirement on assessment sites to report suspected malpractice. (*Criteria paras 28, 29*)

Response

### Access to qualifications and fair assessment

How is equality of opportunity ensured, both in setting the structure and content of the qualifications, and in the processes and arrangements for assessment and awarding, to:

- ensure access and equality of opportunity while safeguarding the integrity of the qualifications (*Criteria para 9a*)
- not create unnecessary barriers to achievement (*Criteria para 9b*)
- guarantee fair assessment for all candidates, including those with particular assessment requirements (*Criteria para 9c*)
- take account of all current legislation in relation to equality of opportunity? (*Criteria para 9d*)

Response

Show how the needs of all potential candidates are considered when developing qualifications, associated tasks and assessment, to minimise any later need to make reasonable adjustments for candidates who have particular requirements. (*Criteria para 14*)

Response

Show how, when necessary, reasonable adjustments are made for candidates with particular requirements to enable them to access fair assessment and demonstrate attainment. Adjustments should not be made that will directly affect performance in the attributes that are the focus of assessment, or otherwise affect the integrity of the award. (*Criteria para 15*)

Response
<p>Show how arrangements for reasonable adjustments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• do not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the specification for the relevant qualification (<i>Criteria para 16a</i>)</li> <li>• reflect the current needs of the individual candidates and, as far as is reasonably possible, their usual methods of working (<i>Criteria para 16b</i>)</li> <li>• do not give the candidates an unfair advantage compared with candidates for whom reasonable adjustments are not being made (<i>Criteria para 16c</i>)</li> <li>• maintain the relevance, reliability and comparability of the assessment. (<i>Criteria para 16d</i>)</li> </ul>
Response
<p>Detail procedures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when adjustments need to be determined centrally, indicating how and when applications should be made on behalf of candidates (<i>Criteria para 17a</i>)</li> <li>• when assessment sites have discretion around adjustments, together with associated requirements for decision making and record keeping. (<i>Criteria para 17b</i>)</li> </ul>
Response
<p>Detail procedures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• giving 'special consideration' to candidates who suffer temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of assessment, including the conditions of eligibility and the application procedures (<i>Criteria para 18</i>)</li> <li>• ensuring that special considerations treat candidates fairly (<i>Criteria para 19a</i>)</li> <li>• specifying the minimum evidence required to make an aggregate (<i>Criteria para 19b</i>)</li> <li>• monitoring reasonable adjustments and special consideration to ensure that</li> </ul>

they are effective and meet the requirements of current legislation. (*Criteria para 20*)

**Security of certificate issue**

Detail the procedures for the issuing of certificates, showing how safeguards are in place to ensure the integrity of the certification process as follows:

- The design of certificates meets the requirements set out by the regulators.
- Certificates are issued without unnecessary delay.
- There are safeguards against fraudulent or mistaken claims for certification.
- Replacement certificates are labelled as such and are only issued after steps have been taken to authenticate the claim. (*Criteria para 22*)

Response

**Self-assessment or business evaluation covering qualifications**

Detail procedures that monitor assessment sites to ensure the integrity of qualifications, including the action taken if there are problems. (*Criteria para 35*)

Response

Detail procedures used to monitor the work of those involved in the assessment and quality assurance processes, including the option of removing their responsibility for this work. (*Criteria para 36*)

Response

Detail procedures that monitor your compliance with the qualifications regulations and your service targets for candidates, including opportunities for assessment sites and candidates to contribute, and how the outcomes are used to prompt action to maintain or improve quality. (*Criteria paras 33, 34*)

Response

## Quality assurance

### Qualifications development

Detail procedures, and related quality assurance systems, used to develop qualifications to ensure that they will bring benefits to a significant number of users, including opportunities for progression, and that they are supported by relevant interested parties and relevant sector bodies. (*Criteria para 43*)

Response

Detail the stages of the unit and qualification development process, showing how:

- the title, content, level, size and credit are determined and standardised
- the specifications/learning outcomes are written
- links, where appropriate, are made to National Occupational Standards and to Key Skills
- relevant legislation, including equality of opportunity, is incorporated.

(*Criteria para 47–52*)

Response

### Assessment

Assessment methods used (please tick):

Written examination       Oral examination       Aural examination

Multiple-choice examination       Practical examination       Portfolio of evidence

Practical demonstration/assignment       Coursework       e-Assessment

Other



For each of the assessment methods used, explain the development process that ensures the assessment arrangements:

- produce a valid measure of the required skills, knowledge, understanding and/or competence (*Criteria para 53a*)
- provide opportunities for the candidates to demonstrate their abilities to meet the full range of requirements (*Criteria para 53b*)
- differentiate only on the basis of the candidates' abilities to meet the requirements (*Criteria para 53c*)
- are free from any discrimination either in wording or content (*Criteria para 53d*)
- are manageable and cost effective to operate with minimum disruption and bureaucracy (*Criteria para 53e*)
- use the minimum equipment and material (*Criteria para 53f*)
- if applicable, options are comparable in terms of the nature and volume of work required and the level of demand (*Criteria para 53g*)
- include a form of independent assessment. (*Criteria para 54*)

Response

### **External/independent assessment**

Detail development of arrangements for standardising external or independent assessment to ensure, where appropriate, that:

- Tasks set meet the specification requirements, are appropriate to the chosen methods of assessment and are comparable over time. (*Criteria para 58a*)
- Tasks set have associated assessment criteria and/or mark schemes. (*Criteria para 58b*)

- Mark schemes/assessment criteria are clearly understood by assessors and are reviewed against a sample of candidates' work to identify where adjustments need to be made. (*Criteria para 58c*)
- The tasks, assessment criteria and/or mark schemes are evaluated by appropriately qualified individuals not involved in their development, against the assessment requirements set out in the qualification specification, and against tasks set in previous years. (*Criteria para 58d*)
- Guidance, including where possible exemplar work, is provided to enable the examiners and/or assessors to meet their responsibilities. (*Criteria para 58e*)
- Arrangements to maintain security before, during and after administration of the assessment are clearly specified. (*Criteria para 58f*)
- Adequate mechanisms are in place to guarantee the consistency of assessment, including across the languages of English, Welsh and Gaelic. (*Criteria para 58i*)

Response

### **Internal assessment**

Detail processes that enable internal assessors to meet their responsibilities, including where appropriate, information on:

- how to ensure that any tasks set are consistent with the specification (*Criteria para 60a*)
- the nature and type of acceptable evidence (*Criteria para 60b*)
- the extent to which candidates can be allowed to redraft work prior to its being assessed (*Criteria para 60c*)
- the limits to the assistance that can be given to candidates with work that is to be assessed (*Criteria para 60d*)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to ensure that assessment requirements can be interpreted consistently (<i>Criteria para 60e</i>)</li> <li>• the minimum data that centres should keep to track candidates' progress (<i>Criteria para 60f</i>)</li> <li>• how the assessment site confirms that evidence produced by candidates is authentic (<i>Criteria para 60g</i>)</li> <li>• if any alternative assessments are agreed by individual sites with the awarding organisation, how to ensure that they are equivalent to standard arrangements. (<i>Criteria para 60h</i>)</li> </ul>
Response

**Moderation/verification**

<p>If relevant to the assessment methods, detail the process for developing moderation/verification arrangements during the design of the qualification, specifying the records and materials assessment sites you will retain for moderation/verification purposes, and providing guidance on carrying out internal moderation/verification. (<i>Criteria para 61</i>)</p>
Response
<p>If relevant to the assessment methods, detail guidance issued to external moderators/verifiers on the size and nature of initial samples, how to ensure samples cover the full range of attainments, assessors and types of assessment, and requirements for additional sampling if initial samples indicate that the required standards are not being applied. (<i>Criteria para 61</i>)</p>
Response

**Awarding**

<p>Show how the organisation ensures that the qualifications awarded are 'external qualifications' as defined in the Education Act 1997 as those authenticated or awarded by an outside body (that is, a body or person other than the institution or</p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

employer that provides the course of education or training leading to the qualification).
Response

## Other evidence required

### Information provided to candidates

<p>Detail information given to candidates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the quality of service they can expect in relation to qualifications</li> <li>• relevant points of contact and communication mechanisms</li> <li>• policy on communicating bilingually where assessment is offered through the medium of Welsh or Gaelic</li> <li>• the fee structure that will apply to the qualification</li> <li>• associated performance measures and feedback arrangements, focusing particularly on manageability and responsiveness.</li> </ul> <p>(Criteria para 32)</p>
Response
<p>Detail the published procedure given to candidates on how to appeal an assessment or other decision. (Criteria para 23)</p>
Response
<p>Show that the appeals procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involves in the decision making at least one independent member, who is not, and has not been at any time during the past seven years, a member of the organisation's board or committees, or an employee or examiner</li> <li>• focuses on whether procedures that were consistent with the regulatory criteria were used and applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keeps appellant informed by acknowledging the appeal, indicating the period within which the appeal will be considered, and sending written outcomes of the appeal</li> <li>• avoids deterring appellants on financial grounds by setting reasonable fees and having an equitable system of refunds for individual and group appeals.</li> </ul> <p>Explain how unresolved appeals can be put to independent review.</p> <p><i>(Criteria para 25)</i></p>
Response
<p>Detail procedures that protect the interests of all candidates and the integrity of the qualification and the QCF should the results of an appeal call into question the accuracy of other results. <i>(Criteria para 26)</i></p>
Response
<p>Detail procedures for monitoring, evaluating and reporting annually on the operation of appeals arrangements, including the number and nature of appeals and their outcomes. <i>(Criteria para 27)</i></p>

### Use of languages

<p>Give a statement on the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in England, qualifications specifications and assessment materials that are expressed in English</li> <li>• in Wales, qualifications specifications and assessment materials that are expressed in Welsh or English, or in Welsh and English; specifications must state explicitly in which language(s) assessment is available</li> <li>• in Northern Ireland, qualifications specifications that are expressed in English, and assessment materials that are expressed either in English, or in English and Gaelic.</li> </ul> <p><i>(Criteria para 39)</i></p>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Response

If qualifications are to be offered in a language other than English, Welsh or Gaelic, detail procedures that ensure:

- The assessment is comparable to that offered in English, Welsh or Gaelic.
- Lack of proficiency in English, Welsh or Gaelic does not prevent the candidate carrying out the role that is supported by the qualification.

*(Criteria para 40)*

Response

If qualifications are to be offered where more than one language is used, show that the mechanisms in place ensure that:

- assessments carried out in the different languages are comparable
- moderation of assessment carried out in the different languages is comparable.

*(Criteria para 42)*