SFEDI®AWARDS

Quality Assurance Overview
Version 2.2

This version of the guide replaces all previous versions. This guide is subject to regular reviews and is maintained electronically by its owners. Electronic copies are version controlled; printed copies are not subject to this control.

Version History

Version	Month/ Year	Section Updated	Description	Reviewed By	Signed off By
2.0	January 2023	All	Multiple changes due to annual review	N Preston	R Lowbridge
2.1	May 2025	All	Multiple changes due to annual review	Quality Team	R Lowbridge
2.2	September 2025	All	Updated to include No Direct claims, and active and inactive centre checks. List of documents required updated. New format layout	Quality Team	R Lowbridge

About this Guide

This guide to our quality assurance process explains how we oversee the delivery of SFEDI Awards qualifications throughout our Centre network providing support and guidance as we strive to achieve a consistently high standard of enterprise learning and skills.

About Us

SFEDI Awards is the UK's only specialist enterprise and business support Awarding Organisation providing flexible solutions to meet the needs of learners.

Operating across the UK, we work with enterprising organisations to support the drive towards a more competitive enterprise landscape with increased employment opportunities, improved productivity and, ultimately, greater prosperity at a local, regional and national level.

Our qualifications are built on research and strong demand from the market place and recognised as market leading by many across all walks of life.

Building links with strong advocates of enterprise learning and skills development we partner with respected organisations, such as the Institute of Enterprise and Entrepreneurs, to ensure that learning becomes a development journey for life as a opposed to a one-off.

Our Qualifications

Self Improvement

Whether going into employment, self-employment or simply starting a journey of self-improvement, our Enterprise Skills Development qualifications can help.

Business Support

Successful business needs high quality support professionals and our Business Support qualifications can help develop the industry recognised behaviours, knowledge and skills required.

Start Up and Growth

Starting, running and growing a business isn't a magic trick. The right training and support provided by our Start Up and Growth qualifications can help build success.

Our Approach to Quality Assurance

Plan

Using many different sources of information from sampling of folders, reports from government agencies, news reports and many other forms, we gather information to inform how best to support our delivery network in the provision of SFEDI Awards qualifications. Whether this be through distance learning or face to face support we aim to do this in the most appropriate way with the least possible burden

Do

Working with our centres comes in different forms from the sampling of folders, discussions through telephone and electronic conferencing systems, face to face support and development plans. The methods used are selected to best meet the needs of the centre and to support a consistent and high-quality delivery of SFEDI Awards qualifications

Check

All decisions and plans generated as a result of activities with our centres are reviewed internally at SFEDI Awards to verify the findings and ensure that any suggested improvement plans are justified, appropriate, proportionate and do not create excessive burdens on centres and those that undertake SFEDI Awards qualifications

Act

With findings verified and improvement plans in place and agreed, we work with our centres to support the implementation of new ways of working that will continue to develop how they deliver SFEDI Awards qualifications, and the support provided to those that undertake them

Benefits to Our Approach

Scheduled

Yearly schedule enables forward planning by centres

Appropriate

Appropriate levels of quality assurance based on need and demand

Timely

Increased levels of on demand quality assurance leading to quicker release of learner folders and certificates

Support

Increased levels of centre support and guidance through individual reports and improvement plans

Consistency

Sharing of best practice across the network enabling an increase in quality and consistency nationally.

Process Overview

SFEDI Awards carries out No Direct Claims (NDC) checks on new qualifications delivered by a Centre when claims are made. Once direct claims has been awarded, Centre monitoring activities are carried out twice a year in June and December. This includes all Centres who have direct claims on qualifications.

Please note that assessment must not be carried out prior to learner registration or centre approval being completed and adequate Quality Assurance staff should have access to Registr8.

No Direct Claims (NDC)

NDC checks can take place at any point during the year.

The monitoring activity will involve a folder sample only unless additional support requirements have been identified.

Step 1 – Submission of folders either by post or electronically
Step 2 – Completion of folder sample
Step 3 – Distribution of individual feedback report

June

The June monitoring activity involves only those Centres who have claimed certificates between the preceding 1st November and 30th April. The monitoring activity will involve a folder sample only unless additional support requirements have been identified.

Step 1 – Request Centre IQA Strategy and Centre IQA Sampling Plans if updated since they were last submitted
Step 2 – EQA sample is selected from records submitted in Step 1
Step 3 – Distribution of sampling list four (4) weeks prior to submission deadline
Step 4 – Submission of folders either by post or electronically
Step 5 – Completion of folder sample
Step 6 – Distribution of individual feedback report

December

The December monitoring activity involves all Centres who have approval to deliver our qualifications. A folder sample will be carried out for any centres who have claimed certificates between the preceding 1st May and 31st October. The monitoring activity will involve a thematic review and a folder sample, where appropriate.

Step 1 – Request Centre IQA Strategy and Centre IQA Sampling Plans
Step 2 – EQA sample is selected from records submitted in Step 1
Step 3 – Distribution of sampling list four (4) weeks prior to submission deadline, along with details of the policy or document request for the associated thematic review
Step 4 – Submission of folders and documents either by post or electronically
Step 5 – Completion of folder sample
Step 6 – Completion of thematic review
Step 7 – Distribution of individual feedback report

If Not Active:

Step 1 – Distribution of details of the policy or document request for the associated thematic review. In addition ask for staff CPD's and confirmation that no staff changes have taken place
Step 2 – Submission of the thematic review documentation and staff CPD's either by post or electronically
Step 3 – Completion of thematic review and staff CPD
Step 4 – Distribution of individual feedback report

What to Include

Depending on whether you are involved in the June or December monitoring activities there are certain things that you should include when submitting your information.

The list below provides you with the minimum information that is required but you can choose to submit more if you feel it will help to demonstrate your working practices in more detail.

If, once we have completed the monitoring activity, we require additional information then we will request this from you separately.

No Direct Claims and/or June sample

- Portfolios for learners that have been requested as part of the sample
- Evidence of initial assessment of the learner
- Mapping for all units
- Assessment and quality assurance reports for each of the learners that have been requested as part of the sample

December sample

- Portfolios for learners that have been requested as part of the sample
- Evidence of initial assessment of the learner
- Mapping for all units
- Assessment and quality assurance reports for each of the learners that have been requested as part of the sample
- CPD records for all Assessment and IQA staff
- Copies of observations of the Assessor/Tutor in action and giving feedback on performance, and of the Assessor planning and reviewing activities with learners.
- Standardisation activities carried out within the last year
- Any policies if they have been updated since they were last submitted. A list of the policies we review can be found on the SFEDI Awards website at https://sfediawards.co.uk/media/SFEDI-Awards-Approval-Meeting-Preparation-Guide-2025.docx
- Policies or documents relating to the thematic review
- Evidence of any instances of the following:
  - Malpractice and Maladministration, Conflicts of Interest, Reasonable Adjustments, Appeals or Complaints

Submitting Folders Electronically

Prepare

Set up a parent folder with subfolders for each learner selected for the sample containing all of the relevant files and zip or compress the parent folder

Access

Login to the Registr8 system and click on the 'Documents' drop down menu

Locate

Click on the 'Upload File' button and locate the zip folder containing all of the learner folders you wish to submit

Upload

Upload the folder to the system and once you refresh the screen you will see it appear under the title 'Request for Information'

Submitting Folders by Post

Prepare

Gather together all folders and relevant paperwork for each of the folders selected for the sample

Print

Print a copy of the sampling list and include with the folders putting a line through any folders that are not being included

Submit

Send the package securely to the SFEDI Awards office c/o EQA Sampling Team ensuring to include return details if different from the main address and contact that is held by SFEDI Awards.

Additional Information when Posting Files

This outlines the responsibilities of both the Centre and SFEDI Awards with regard to the protection of personal data and physical evidence under the UK GDPR and associated regulations.

1. Responsibility Prior to Receipt

Until the point at which the posted materials are confirmed as received by SFEDI Awards, the submitting Centre remains the Data Controller and is responsible for ensuring the safe handling, transit, and delivery of any candidate evidence. This includes:
- Using secure and trackable postal or courier services.
- Retaining proof of postage and tracking numbers.
- Packaging materials appropriately to prevent loss or damage.
- Ensuring compliance with data protection regulations, including redacting any unnecessary personal data.

2. Confirmation of Receipt and Transfer of Responsibility

Responsibility for the materials transfers to SFEDI Awards upon confirmed receipt at our designated postal address. We will issue a written acknowledgment of delivery (typically by email) to the submitting centre upon receipt.

From this point forward, SFEDI Awards becomes the Data Controller for the submitted evidence and assumes responsibility for its storage, review, and processing in line with our internal data protection and confidentiality policies.

3. Lost or Undelivered Submissions

In the event that materials are lost in transit and do not arrive at SFEDI Awards' designated postal address:

- The Centre remains responsible for initiating any investigation with the postal or courier service.
- We accept no liability for items not received into our possession.
- Centres are advised to retain copies or digital scans of submitted work where appropriate, in accordance with their own data protection procedures and retention policies, to mitigate against such risks.

If confirmation of delivery cannot be provided and the evidence cannot be retrieved, the following may apply:

- The learner's assessment may be marked as incomplete.
- The Centre may be asked to resubmit evidence, where feasible and appropriate.
- In exceptional circumstances, and subject to our quality assurance processes, alternative arrangements may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

EQA Reports

Following the monitoring activity each Centre receives an individual report providing the following:

- A list of folders sampled (if applicable)
- Feedback on the Centres quality assurance systems and processes
- Feedback on folders sampled (if applicable) including if the EQA agrees with the certificate decision of the learners in the sample
- Details of any areas for action including how these can be met and the deadline the actions need to be addressed by
- Recommendations for improvements including suggested solutions
- Details of any missing documents which are required
- Details on any suspected malpractice or maladministration identified
- Details of any sanctions applied
- Decisions regarding the change of the risk rating which may affect direct claims status

Direct Claims States (DCS)

DCS is a system where a Centre can claim certificates for learners without the need for prior authorisation by SFEDI Awards and is awarded after multiple cohorts or samples of completions to demonstrate both quality and consistency in the approach that the centre takes in the delivery, assessment, and internal quality assurance of a qualification.

It is awarded per qualification and the decision as to whether it has been agreed or withdrawn can be seen within the EQA Report issued following a monitoring activity taking place. Whether a centre holds DCS can also be seen at any time through the Registr8 system.

DCS Held

These qualifications will be part of the two-point monitoring activities in June and December each year and a Centre is not required to submit folders at other times unless requested by SFEDI Awards to allow for additional sampling and support to be provided. Completed folders must be retained until their release has been authorised.

DCS Not Held

Those qualifications that DCS is not held for, a Centre can make ad hoc submissions of folders throughout the year to claim certification and also work towards the awarding of DCS for those qualifications. There is no need to wait until the June or December submission points.

Risk Approach

To help ensure appropriate levels of support are provided to individual Centres within our delivery network, we make use of a risk rating system based on a variety of sources of information including monitoring activities, government agency reports, news reports and many other forms.

This helps in the determination of a robust risk approach where we allocate a risk rating to each individual centre within the delivery network following these three levels:

Green

Where there are no issues in the delivery of qualifications or where there is a recommendation but where there is no threat to the integrity of qualification delivery and/or the safety and/or disadvantage of learners

Amber

Where there are issues identified or likely to occur that gives rise to concern regarding the integrity of the delivery of qualifications and/or the safety and/or disadvantage of learners

Red

Where there is an identifiable breakdown in the management, delivery, quality assurance and/or certification of qualifications and/or the safety and/or disadvantage of learners is apparent. Consistent failure to address action points raised in monitoring reports may also lead to allocation of red risk rating, at the discretion of the Quality Team.

Additional Support

We also recognise that there may be a need to provide additional support outside of the normal monitoring activities.

Our Quality Assurance Team are available to provide support at any time outside of the normal monitoring activities taking place and can be contacted either through telephone or email via the SFEDI Awards offices.

Contact Us:

If you have any questions about the content of this guide, please contact our customer service department.

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