

Quality Assurance Policy

V2.1

Introduction

This is version two of the Quality Assurance Policy and replaces all previous versions. This document is subject to regular revision and maintained electronically by its owner. Electronic copies are version controlled. Printed copies are not subject to this control.

Change history to V2.1

Date	Section	Change	Reviewed by	Signed off By
January 2023	All	Multiple changes due to annual review	N Preston	R Lowbridge

Centre Re-Approval

SFEDI Awards Centres are approved for a 3-year period and two months prior to the anniversary, SFEDI Awards will notify them of the steps required to re-approve should they chose to. Where they chose not to re-approve, the Centre Withdrawal policy will be implemented.

This re-approval involves a review of:

- The Centre's operations against the Centre Approval Criteria
- Registration and certification activity
- Any appeals and/or complaints received
- Notifications from other agencies and bodies, for example Awarding Bodies, qualifications regulators, funding bodies, etc.

Where a Centre wishes to re-approve, a desktop review of information held about the Centre will be completed by the Operations Manager prior to the re-approval activity taking place. This ensures that all relevant information is available that could impact on the decision as to re-approve and/or relevant actions required.

If the Centre has a running history and has had EQA activity carried out recently which included a policy review, then the desktop review may be all that is needed.

Where there is no running history due to the Centre not being active for 1 year, then the re-approval activities should be scheduled to last between 1 – 2 hours but could last longer dependent on the questions arising from discussions, the complexity of the re-approval and the number of qualifications and/or delivery locations included. This timeframe is a guide and should not be used to stifle discussions or to limit scrutiny of the Centre and its plans moving forward.

As the activity should be conducted in a conversational style, the SFEDI Awards representative should, as much as is possible, make use of open-ended questions to provide the Centre with the opportunity to present an overview of their performance over their time as a SFEDI Awards Centre.

Open-ended questions should not:

- Require one word or short answers
- Limit the opportunity for the Centre to provide fully considered answers
- Lead the content of the answer provided

Questions should, as much as is possible, be framed using words such as why, how, what, describe, explain, tell me about.

If required to start the conversation, make use of funnelling questions where specific subject matters are used to then encourage the Centre to move towards responding to open questions.

The re-approval activity should also provide the opportunity for the Centre to ask any support questions they may have or points of clarification. It is not meant as a one-way process to meet the goal of completing the final re-approval report.

At the end of the activity, feedback can be provided, and the initial recommendation can be given as to whether the Centre will be re-approved, re-approved with actions, re-approved but without the ability to offer qualifications at this time, referred for further activities.

It should be made clear to the Centre that, at this stage, it is simply a recommendation, and the final decision will be communicated once it has been ratified by SFEDI Awards.

On the culmination of the re-approval activity, the SFEDI Awards representative will consider the facts as discovered during the activity and formulate the report for submission to the Operations Manager.

The Operations Manager will judge:

- How the re-approval process has been conducted and if it is in line with relevant policies
- The findings of the re-approval process including consideration of final recommendations
- Recommended resulting actions

On agreement and authorisation of the report, the Operations Manager will arrange for the Centre to be notified and provide the following:

- Copy of the report
- Copy of the Centre Agreement

The Operations Manager will also request an invoice to be sent by finance to the Centre for payment.

On confirmed receipt of a re-signed copy of the Centre Agreement and payment of the re-approval invoice, the Operations Manager will arrange for a new Centre certificate to be sent and internal systems are updated.

Ongoing Quality Monitoring

Sampling Frequency

SFEDI Awards completes two scheduled sampling activities per year in June and December with additional samples conducted where required to maintain the safety and integrity of the assessment and awarding process and/or to support where a Centre does not hold Direct Claims Status or where a qualification is not eligible for Direct Claims Status.

Sampling Rates

SFEDI Awards uses the following sampling rate:

Centre Risk Rating	Sampling Ratio (as a minimum)
Green	1 folder/assessment for every 20 completed
Amber	1 folders/assessments for every 10 completed
Red	5 folders/assessments for every 10 completed, however, 100% sampling may be introduced

Centres should adopt the following minimum sampling rates when they are internally quality assuring qualifications:

Category	Sampling Ratio (as a minimum)
Newly qualified Assessors/Trainers or Assessors/Trainers new to the Centre or those Assessors/Trainers who are continually falling short of the standard required	100% sampling rate
	Observation of practice every 3-months
Assessors/Trainers who are in need of development but often meet the standard required	50% sampling rate
	Observation every 6-months
Assessors/Trainers who are experienced with the qualification they have been assigned to and continually meet the standard required	10% sampling rate
	Observation every 12-months

As with the rates used by SFEDI Awards, the rates for Centres should be considered as a minimum and an Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) should select a higher proportion of folders/assessments where deemed necessary and appropriate to do so.

When sampling folders/assessments, SFEDI Awards tests that the processes and procedures that have been approved within the Centre are being followed, that SFEDI Awards policies and procedures are being adhered to, that learners are being supported and that qualification standards and requirements are being consistently met.

All units within a qualification must be sampled across learners within a 12-month period to ensure that quality and consistency has been checked. Where not all units within a qualification are delivered within a 12-month period then sampling should be across all units that have been delivered within the 12-months.

Evidence may be holistically assessed across multiple units but should only be considered against the unit(s) that are part of the sample unless the findings of the sample leads to concerns that could

impact on additional units or where it is felt that an increase in the number of units sampled would be appropriate and beneficial to the maintaining of standards.

SFEDI Awards will check that:

- Registrations and certification claims have been made in a timely manner
- The requirements for the qualification have been met with relation to the number and combination of units required, if the qualification is unit based
- Clear evidence is present of the initial assessment and planning for evidence gathering involving the learner and the employer, if applicable
- Clear evidence of mandatory assessment methodologies and guidance having been followed and that indicative content as listed within the specification has been included. Where mandatory assessment methodologies have not been specified, has the Centre followed the pre-approved assessment methodologies from the time of approval and has the indicative content as listed within the specification been included
- Clear evidence of the accurate judgement and recording of evidence against the requirements of the qualification, meaningful feedback being provided to the learner and updated planning reflecting progress through the completion of the qualification
- Evidence is of sufficient depth and breadth as required by the qualification
- IQA sampling strategies and plans are in place and carried out timely or replanning has taken place for good reason where original plans are no longer appropriate or possible
- IQA sampling has highlighted and fed back any actions to the Assessor in a meaningful way with plans put in place and signed off once completed ready for resubmission
- Final sign off by the Assessor and IQA has taken place

It is expected that Centres should adopt a similar principle in conducting their sampling of folders/assessments to ensure that they align with those of SFEDI Awards.

Where possible, folders/assessments will be selected from each of the Assessors/Trainers and IQAs and each of the delivery locations of the Centre where multiple exist. To aid this, Centres will be required to submit a tracker listing the following information:

- Learner name
- Centre location, if more than one exists
- Assessor name
- IQA name
- Sampling completed to date, eg. interim/summative, observation, learner interview, date completed

The sample of folders/assessments required will be taken from the list provided. Where it is found that learners are missing from the information submitted, SFEDI Awards may choose to increase the sample or, as a minimum, will discuss the administrative error with the Centre as part of the monitoring process.

On either the deadline for the conducting of a folder/assessment sample or as a result of a request from a Centre, the Operations Manager will request the Centre tracker be submitted so that a sampling list can be generated.

The Operations Manager will organise with the Centre for the submission of the following:

- Learner portfolios/assessments

- Associated assessment and quality assurance paperwork
- Copies of any appeals or complaints relating to the learner portfolios selected
- Any other relevant information or documentation relating to the delivery, assessment, and quality assurance of the qualification(s) and learner portfolios

On receipt of the required documentation, whether hardcopy or electronically, the Operations Manager will forward the relevant information to the SFEDI Awards EQA who will conduct the quality assurance activity.

If during the sampling activity, evidence of suspected or actual maladministration and/or malpractice is discovered, this will be notified to the Operations Manager for consideration in line with the Maladministration and Malpractice Policy.

At the end of the sampling activity, feedback can be provided to the Centre as to any points for consideration or actions that may be recommended but it should be made clear to the Centre that, at this stage, it is simply a recommendation, and the final decision will be communicated once it has been ratified by SFEDI Awards.

On the culmination of the sampling activity, the EQA will consider the facts as discovered during the sample and formulate the report for submission to the Operations Manager.

If the Operations Manager requires additional information or clarification, the EQA will work with the Centre to gain the additional information prior to submitting the report to the Qualifications Manager for re-consideration.

The Operations Manager will judge:

- How the sampling process has been conducted and if it is in line with SFEDI Awards policies
- The findings of the sampling activity including consideration of final recommendations
- Recommended resulting actions

On agreement and authorisation of the report the Operations Manager will notify the Centre of the outcome and forward a copy of the report and update the SFEDI Awards system with any actions that have resulted from the activity and assign to the appropriate person.

Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Not all qualifications will be eligible for DCS and decisions as to whether DCS will be awarded, if applicable to the qualification, are made in line with the Direct Claims (DCS policy).

Extraordinary Quality Monitoring

On occasions, SFEDI Awards will receive information from other Awarding Bodies, Regulators, press sources, and other agencies such as law enforcement which may give rise to the need to conduct extraordinary quality monitoring activities.

Due to the nature of these notifications, they will be considered as part of the Maladministration and Malpractice policy as they would normally give rise to the need to investigate a potential impact to the delivery of qualifications.

Centre Risk Ratings

All SFEDI Awards quality monitoring activities will form part of the judgements as to the risk ratings that are allocated to a Centre. This ensures that we can concentrate our support and resources where most appropriate to ensure the continued rigour in the delivery of our qualifications.

We operate the following risk ratings:

Risk Rating	Meaning
Green	Where there are no issues in the delivery of qualifications or where there is an improvement action required but where there is no threat to the integrity of qualifications 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

Where required, sanctions will be assigned to a Centre in line with the findings of quality assurance activities and allocated risk ratings.

Contact Us

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

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