

# About this booklet

<b>Who is it for?</b>	Centres delivering accredited qualifications
<b>What does it include?</b>	A summary of the roles and responsibilities of centres and awarding bodies, and information on the regulatory authorities for accredited qualifications
<b>What is it for?</b>	Helps centres to understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to accredited qualifications, which are covered in further detail in the statutory regulations and codes of practice
<b>Related materials</b>	See the 'Organisations and resources' section of this booklet
<b>For more information</b>	<p><b>In England:</b> QCA 020 7509 5556 info@qca.org.uk</p> <p><b>In Wales:</b> ACCAC 029 2037 5428 info@accac.org.uk</p> <p><b>In Northern Ireland:</b> CCEA 028 9026 1202 info@ccea.org.uk</p>
<b>For more copies</b>	<p>QCA Orderline PO Box 29 Norwich NR3 1GN</p> <p>Tel 08700 60 60 15; Fax 08700 60 60 17 Email <a href="mailto:orderline@qca.org.uk">orderline@qca.org.uk</a></p>
<b>QCA order reference</b>	QCA/05/1610

ENTRY LEVEL

ADULT LITERACY  
AND NUMERACY  
QUALIFICATIONS

ESOL  
QUALIFICATIONS

KEY SKILLS

GCSE

GCE

AEA

NVQ

OTHER  
VOCATIONAL  
QUALIFICATIONS

2005

# Delivering accredited qualifications

The roles and responsibilities of centres



Qualifications and Curriculum Authority



AWDURDOD  
CYMHWYSTERAU,  
CWRICWLWM AC ASESU  
CYMRU  
QUALIFICATIONS,  
CURRICULUM &  
ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY  
FOR WALES



First published in 2005

© Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 2005

ISBN 1-85838-725-6

Reproduction, storage, adaptation or translation, in any form or by any means, of this publication is prohibited without prior written permission of the publisher, unless within the terms of licences issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency. Excerpts may be reproduced for the purpose of research, private study, criticism or review, or by educational institutions solely for educational purposes, without permission, providing full acknowledgement is given.

Printed in Great Britain

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is an exempt charity under Schedule 2 of the Charities Act 1993.

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority  
83 Piccadilly  
London W1J 8QA

[www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)

# Introduction

This booklet is for centres delivering accredited qualifications. It gives a summary of the roles and responsibilities of centres and awarding bodies. Information on the regulatory authorities (for accredited qualifications) is outlined below.

The regulatory authorities in England (QCA), Wales (ACCAC) and Northern Ireland (CCEA) are responsible for the accreditation and ongoing monitoring of qualifications.

They publish criteria and codes of practice for awarding bodies, which include the requirements that awarding bodies should have of their centres, and steps that awarding bodies must take should centres fail to meet these standards. The criteria also include the service levels that centres should expect from awarding bodies. Particular qualification types (eg NVQs, A levels, GCSEs) have additional requirements contained in the relevant codes of practice.

Currently, all accredited qualifications are contained within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The NQF sets

out the levels at which qualifications can be recognised. It helps learners make informed decisions about the qualifications on offer and the awarding bodies that provide them. The accreditation of qualifications makes sure they are of a high quality and that they meet the needs of learners, higher education providers and employers.

Future qualification and framework reforms are proposed and the regulatory authorities will make sure centres are kept informed of their responsibilities in relation to these developments.

For details of accredited qualifications, visit [www.qca.org.uk/openquals/](http://www.qca.org.uk/openquals/).

Further guidance on the roles and responsibilities of centres is available from the relevant awarding bodies.

Contact information and references for important related publications, such as the statutory regulations and codes of practice for accredited qualifications, are in the ‘Organisations and resources’ section of this booklet. A bilingual Welsh/English version of this leaflet is available from ACCAC.



## Roles and responsibilities of awarding bodies

Awarding bodies offer accredited qualifications. Their main responsibilities are set out below.

Awarding bodies must meet a number of quality assurance criteria. They also have a duty to ensure that the administrative requirements placed on centres are manageable and cost-effective, and must publish for centres details about:

- entering/registering candidates for assessment
- information on the conduct of assessment
- the retention of assessment evidence
- how to request ‘reasonable adjustments’<sup>1</sup> and ‘special considerations’
- issuing results/claiming certificates
- how to make enquiries and appeals about results
- dealing with malpractice.

A list of awarding bodies offering accredited qualifications can be found at [www.qca.org.uk/openquals/](http://www.qca.org.uk/openquals/).

---

<sup>1</sup> The term ‘reasonable adjustments’ is used in place of the term ‘special arrangements’, to reflect the terminology in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, under which the final phase of rights of access came into force in 2004.

# Roles and responsibilities of centres

Centres deliver accredited qualifications. Their main responsibilities are set out below and are included in the statutory regulations and codes of practice for accredited qualifications.

## Accountability

Centres must have a named point of contact for the qualifications they provide. This means that when a candidate has a query regarding any aspect of a qualification, or when an awarding body needs to make contact with a centre, it must be clear to whom they should direct enquiries and correspondence.

If centres are working in partnership with other organisations to offer a qualification, they need to specify the roles and responsibilities of each organisation so that these arrangements are clear to candidates and awarding bodies.

## Approved age categories for accredited qualifications

Centres must be aware of the age categories, under which accredited qualifications need to be approved,

in order to be publicly funded.

They must make sure that learners are working towards qualifications that are approved for their age group, particularly in relation to pre-16 learners, where there may be health and safety implications.

There are separate arrangements for the approval of qualifications for different age categories in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Authenticating

Centres must take all necessary steps to ensure that work submitted is the candidate's own.

## Certificates

Centres must understand how and when to apply for certification and must assist awarding bodies in guarding against fraudulent or mistaken claims.

## Enquiries and appeals

Centres must ensure that they understand awarding bodies' enquiries and appeals processes for each qualification that they deliver, and must provide appropriate

information and support to enable candidates to access the enquiries and appeals services.

They must also have documented procedures for handling disputes when a candidate disagrees with a decision by the centre not to support an enquiry or wishes to appeal against the centre's own internal assessment decisions. In deciding whether to support an enquiry or appeal, centres should take account of all relevant factors and make sure candidates have a reasonable opportunity to express their views.

Centres offering GCSE, GCE AS and A level, VCE, GNVQ and

AEA qualifications must ensure that published appeals processes relating to internal assessment decisions are made widely available and accessible to all candidates.

They must make sure that candidates for these qualifications are aware of the final stage of the enquiries and appeals service, which is offered by the Examinations Appeals Board (EAB), and that this service applies where awarding bodies' normal enquiries and appeals procedures have been exhausted.



## **Freedom of Information Act**

Centres should be aware that the information they supply to awarding bodies could be required by the regulatory authorities.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, implemented on 1 January 2005, information held by the regulatory authorities can be disclosed to a member of the public on request. This requirement is subject to exemptions and excludes personal information.

Advice and further information on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office at [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk).

## **Internal assessment and moderation/verification**

Centres must ensure that they fully understand the assessment specification provided by the awarding body, and that they comply with its provisions.

This specification will include information on the limits to assistance provided to candidates; the extent to which candidates are

allowed to redraft their work; the nature, type and recording of required evidence and the internal moderation/verification requirements.

Centres must ensure that internally assessed work is submitted to agreed deadlines.

## **Malpractice**

In order to maintain the integrity of accredited qualifications, the centre must report to the awarding body immediately any suspected malpractice involving candidates, centre staff or any other parties.

Centres should respond speedily and openly to all requests for an investigation into an incident, and a nominated representative of the centre should personally supervise all investigations resulting from an allegation of malpractice.

## **Monitoring**

Centres must agree to provide the regulatory authorities and awarding bodies with access to premises, people and records, and to cooperate with awarding bodies' monitoring activities.

### **Reasonable adjustments**

Centres should inform awarding bodies immediately if they are aware that a candidate needs access to reasonable adjustments.

### **Registration of candidates**

Centres must register/enter candidates for assessment in an efficient manner and following awarding bodies' timetables.

They must recognise any restrictions regarding the minimum amount of time that candidates must be registered with the awarding body before certification, as well as the combination of units and or qualifications allowed.



## Resources and systems

Centres must have adequate systems and resources in place – including staff and, where appropriate, equipment, materials and software – to support the delivery of the qualification. They must ensure that their staff are competent and have access to appropriate training, guidance and support.

The resources and systems must support equality of access for candidates, as far as is practicable<sup>2</sup>.

## Security and confidentiality

Centres must ensure the security and confidentiality of assessment materials and records, including examination question papers, examination scripts, records of marking, and portfolios of evidence, before, during and after the assessment has taken place. Any breach in security must be reported to the awarding body immediately.

---

<sup>2</sup> Guidance is available in the government publications, the *Code of practice for schools* and the *Code of practice for providers of post-16 education and related services*, and in the *Equality commission for Northern Ireland code of practice: rights of access, goods, facilities, services and premises*. Further information is also available on the websites of the Disability Rights Commission, [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org), and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, [www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org).

# Organisations and resources

## Regulatory authorities

England: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), 020 7509 5556, [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk).

Wales: Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru/Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC), 029 2037 5428, [www.accac.org.uk](http://www.accac.org.uk).

Northern Ireland: Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), 028 9026 1202, [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).

## Publications and resources for accredited qualifications

*The statutory regulation of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2004)*, QCA/04/1293.

*GCSE, GCE, VCE, GNVQ and AEA code of practice (2005/6)*, QCA/05/1533.

*The NVQ code of practice (2001)*, QCA/02/875.

The National Assessment Agency (NAA) has produced the following publications:

- *Exams office good practice guide 2004–2005, Part one: The exam cycle*, QCA/04/1339
- *Managing exams in your centre, A good practice guide for the senior leadership team and the exams office 2005–2006, Part two: Running an efficient exams centre*, QCA/05/1625.

These publications provide useful information for centres offering GCSEs, GCSEs in vocational subjects, GCEs, VCEs, GNVQs, AEAAs, Free Standing Mathematics Qualifications (FSMQs), Entry Level Certificates (ELC) or STEP Mathematics. See [www.naa.org.uk](http://www.naa.org.uk).

## Organisations and publications for approved age categories

For information on the approved age categories of accredited qualifications:

- in England: Department for Education and Skills (DfES), [www.dfes.gov.uk/section96/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/section96/) and [www.dfes.gov.uk/section97/](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/section97/)
- in Wales: Department for Education and Training, [www.learning.wales.gov.uk](http://www.learning.wales.gov.uk).
- in Northern Ireland: Department of Education, [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk).