

The Benefits of Credit Rating: SCQF Case Study Youth Scotland – Youth Achievement Awards



Background

Youth Scotland aims to enable young people throughout Scotland to maximise their full potential through the provision of quality educational and social opportunities. Providing services to 1,055 youth agencies, the organisation works in partnership with a network of area associations and local authorities to support youth workers in the delivery of safe and inspiring leisure opportunities to 62,947 young people throughout Scotland.

What programmes were credit rated?

The Youth Achievement Awards, administered by the Youth Scotland youth group network and SCQF credit rated by the SQA, are an innovative approach to recognising the contributions of young people in a number of different settings, including volunteering work and active citizenship. Skills developed include communication, teamwork and relationships, along with organisational skills through

the creation of the personal portfolio. Attitudinal change is achieved through encouraging young people to:

- take responsibility for the activities they are involved in;
- reflect on what they have achieved;
- place a value on what they have accomplished; and,
- develop motivation, confidence and self-esteem.

The Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum Awards were credit rated onto the SCQF in 2007. This means that their level can be directly compared to the level of other mainstream qualifications, including Nationals, Highers, SVQs and HNCs. SQA credit rated the Awards at levels 4 -7 on the SCQF.

In 2012, the Dynamic Youth Awards were also credit rated. The One to Five Star Awards are at SCQF Level 3 and credit points awarded range from 1 - 31. These Awards provide a framework for supporting young people to plan, record evidence, review and provide peer support to each other with support from an Award Group Worker. The Awards follow a Plan-Do-Review process which enables young people to more effectively recognise and articulate their learning and achievements within different contexts. This increases their self-esteem, improves motivation and keeps young people engaged with learning. The Awards fully support the aims, values, purpose and implementation of Curriculum for Excellence.

What are the benefits of credit rating?

Credit rating helps learning providers and employers to understand the value of these Awards as they are easier to compare to the level of mainstream school qualifications.

Youth Scotland has also witnessed a rise in the number of operating agencies offering Youth Achievement Awards and the number of awards being certificated since their inclusion on the SCQF. Youth Scotland believes that this rise is no coincidence, and is due to the added value the credit rated status of the Awards provides to centres and young people

George Cherrie, Senior Awards Development Worker at Youth Scotland, comments, *"The Youth Achievement Awards provide a framework to recognise and value young people's achievement regardless of the learning environment. Their value has increased dramatically through SCQF credit rating. This is evidenced by the increase in registrations to offer the awards and the number of award completions, particularly from schools and colleges, since credit rating was completed in November 2007."*

Aileen Ponton, CEO of the SCQF Partnership, adds, *"The credit rating of the Youth Achievement Awards on the SCQF provides additional currency and credibility, and their placement on the Framework gives parity with other qualifications and awards. It has also been important to be able to recognise these awards on Insight which provides a statistical tool to allow schools to evaluate and enhance attainment across a range of qualifications."*

For more information on the benefits of credit rating your learning programmes, contact the SCQF Partnership on 0845 270 7371 or at info@scqf.org.uk.