

**QUALITY  
ASSURANCE  
MODEL FOR  
SCQFP APPROVED  
CREDIT RATING  
BODIES**

**SECTION 5**  
**Periodic Review**



# Section 5

## Periodic Review

Please note that at the time of publishing in 2020 that any reference to a physical visit to an organisation or CRB within the model may be substituted by a blended approach of online meetings, email and telephone communication until further notice.

*This Quality Assurance Model (QAM) applies specifically to those SCQFP Approved CRBs but for ease of reading the term Credit Rating Body or CRB will be used in this document*

Periodic review takes place every four years<sup>1</sup> and involves:

- The completion of a [submission](#) document with accompanying [evidence](#)
- A review team [pre-visit](#) meeting
- A [visit](#) to the CRB by a review team
- A formal [report](#)
- [Scrutiny](#) of the [report](#) by the SCQFP Quality Committee and SCQFP Board
- Letter of [outcome](#) from the Chair of the SCQFP Board
- A right of appeal

The CRB will be contacted by the SCQFP Officer to arrange a date for the periodic review and the date for the submission of the self-assessment.

### **The Submission (self-assessment)**

A template will be provided for the submission. The template should be submitted together with accompanying evidence electronically.

The purpose of the submission is for the CRB to clearly explain how it continues to meet all the quality criteria and therefore the CRB should include relevant evidence which demonstrates this. The CRB should also report on its experience of credit rating within the 4-year period since the initial approval or last periodic review. This will normally involve describing what has worked well, what has not, issues identified and how these have been addressed. The report should also indicate the CRB's plans for using its credit rating authority in the future and the impact of this on the CRB, learners and its commitment to the SCQF. It is important that the CRB completes the submission template with a full narrative text to accompany the evidence explaining any lessons learned, changes made over the 4 years, any successes and the rationale for strategic and operational decisions taken and future plans.

### **Evidence**

The following evidence **must** be submitted by the CRB for the periodic review:

- 1 CRB's Credit rating process/procedure (if changed from the previous version submitted)
- 2 A full set of the latest published accounts
- 3 A complete list of programmes credit rated under your credit rating authority including archived programmes (*programmes should be clearly marked current or archived*)
- 4 Certificate template(s) (if changed from previous version)
- 5 Number of learners certificated for each programme in last 12 months
- 6 Number of learners registered on current credit rated programmes and indication of those domiciled in Scotland
- 7 Report from the last internal review of credit rating systems

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<sup>1</sup> The SCQFP Board reserve the right to bring forward a periodic review visit if there is a high or medium risk identified

- 8 Report from the last external review of credit rating systems (if undertaken since the previous SCQFP monitoring activity)
- 9 A copy of the CRB's RPL policy (if changed from previous version)

If the CRB has third party credit rating authority the following additional information must be supplied: (see section 6):

- 11 The CRB's credit rating process/procedure for third party credit rating (if changed from previous version submitted)
- 12 A copy of the paperwork that supports annual monitoring of third party programmes (if changed from previous version)
- 13 A copy of any guidance issued to third parties on submissions, use of the logo, certification etc. (if changed from previous version)
- 14 Certificate templates agreed - this may be a single template, however, if different templates have been agreed with different organisations, all of these must be supplied (if changed from previous versions)
- 14 A full list of third parties together with contact details

In addition, the CRB should ensure that it submits any other relevant evidence to support its submission indicating clearly why that piece of evidence has been submitted and which criterion it supports.

On receipt of the submission the SCQFP will issue an invoice to the CRB for the full periodic review fee. Details of fees are available from the SCQF Partnership and are also available on the SCQF website, [www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk).

The submission will be reviewed by the SCQFP named Officer in the first instance to ensure that all parts of the template have been completed. This will include a review of the CRB's financial position and viability. In addition, a questionnaire will be sent to a sample of third parties (where relevant) to gain feedback on the level of support and guidance received from the CRB.

The Review Team will then meet to review the submission against the QAM Criteria, the SCQF Principles and the risk factors.

The risk factors used are:

- Significant changes to staff involved in the credit rating process
- A significant change in credit rating activity (up or down)
- Changes to the credit rating process
- Complaints received about the CRB
- Issues still outstanding over a number of annual and/or periodic reviews
- Potential for reputational damage to the SCQF
- Potential for impact on current learners

In addition, reports from the SCQF Database will be cross referenced with the data received from the CRB in the submission. The SCQFP Officer may contact the CRB for points of clarification if required.

## **The Review Team**

On receipt of the submission, a Review Team will be formed which will comprise a minimum of 4 reviewers as below:

- The current named SCQFP Officer
- The planned named SCQFP Officer<sup>2</sup>
- External Reviewer
- SCQF Quality Committee member (Chair)

In addition, the team may also include a further member for training or for shadowing purposes. This member will not play any part in the review or decision making and the CRB will be notified in advance of this.

### **The review team meeting (pre-visit)**

The Review Team will individually and collectively consider all the evidence submitted by the CRB and will identify issues from the submission that need to be investigated further or require clarification. These will be agreed by the Review Team and will be sent to the named contact within the CRB, together with an agenda for the visit to allow time for the CRB to prepare.

Whilst every effort will be made to notify the CRB of issues, or points of clarification, prior to the visit, it should be noted that some issues may come to light during the visit or subsequent report compilation process.

### **The Periodic Visit**

The Review Team will meet with representatives of the CRB to discuss the self-assessment and the issues and points of clarification indicated in the review team feedback. The purpose of the visit is to arrive at a judgement on whether the CRB continues to meet each of the quality criteria.

The Quality Committee member on the Review Team will act as chair for the meeting. The External Reviewer will take notes of the meeting with a view to compiling the final report on behalf of the team. No formal minute of the meeting will be taken.

At the end of the visit the Chair of the Review Team will summarise the key areas of discussion and highlight any areas where there have been concerns or possible actions indicated.

Please note that due to the governance arrangements the Review Team is unable to give a decision on the day of the visit.

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<sup>2</sup> This SCQFP Officer will then become the CRB's named SCQFP Officer until the next Periodic Review

## **The Report**

After the periodic review visit, the External Reviewer will write the review report on behalf of the Review Team which will include a narrative on the CRB, a section on each criterion, the overall findings and conclusions and the reasons for those findings.

The draft report will be circulated to the Review Team members for comment and suggested amendment. During this editing process, the SCQFP Officer may contact the CRB for further clarification. When the editing process is complete, the report will be sent to the CRB for a factual accuracy check. At this stage the CRB will also be asked to respond to the report by way of an action plan. In the event of any other amendments being suggested by the CRB it will be the responsibility of the SCQFP Officer to finalise the report, to the satisfaction of the Review Team and the CRB, prior to the report and action plan being submitted to the SCQFP Quality Committee.

## **Scrutiny by the SCQFP Quality Committee and Board**

The SCQFP Quality Committee is responsible for making a recommendation to the Board on whether the CRB should continue to credit rate. The report and action plan will be sent to the full Committee and will be scrutinised at the next meeting. The Quality Committee member on the review team will provide a short overall verbal summary at the meeting. The Quality Committee may amend or add any of the conditions or recommendations proposed by the Review Team before making its own overall recommendations. The overall recommendations that the SCQFP Quality Committee can make are:

- CRB can continue as a CRB
- CRB can continue as a CRB with conditions
- CRB is suspended from credit rating
- The process for removal of credit rating authority is initiated

The report, action plan and the Quality Committee's recommendation will then be presented to the SCQFP Board which will make the decision based on that recommendation. However, the Board also has the right to ask for further clarification from the Quality Committee and the CRB and to add further conditions if deemed necessary.

For each outcome the SCQFP Board reserves the right to insist that the next annual monitoring of a CRB takes the form of a visit in the following year or that an additional monitoring visit takes place in-year. This decision will be made using a risk-based approach and the risk matrix (section 1) and may not necessarily indicate a poor outcome at the periodic review.