



## **Language of Assessment in Customised Products Validated by SQA**

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<b>Policy author</b>	Policy and Research Manager
<b>Policy owner</b>	Head of Service for Higher National and Vocational Qualifications Team
<b>Business area</b>	Policy, Analysis and Standards Directorate
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## **Why do we need the policy?**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles relating to the language of assessment of customised units and qualifications which are validated by SQA and, specifically where candidates undertake their assessment in languages other than English.

The policy supports SQA's corporate goals to:

- ◆ provide a credible qualifications system
- ◆ be flexible in meeting customers' needs
- ◆ be trusted, respected and valued by our customers, stakeholders and partners

## **What does it apply to?**

This policy applies to the internal assessment of Customised Awards and/or units.

## **Who is it for?**

This policy is for SQA centres, learners and all SQA staff.

## **What support is available?**

The Higher National and Vocational Policy Team, within the Policy, Analysis and Standards Directorate can provide support on implementing this policy.

SQA's Business Development and International Teams can provide support on developing customised products and on Customised Products currently being delivered in languages other than English.

The Customised Awards Team within the Qualification Portfolio Management Team can provide support on customised products.

For information on SQA's quality assurance processes, please visit SQA's quality assurance webpage: <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/96458.html>.

## **Alternative assessment sites and remote assessment**

When customised units and/or qualifications are approved, the language of assessment is set. If the owner of the qualification wishes to deliver in another language or in another country, a formal request must be made and approved by SQA.

This process applies regardless of whether delivery and assessment is to be face-to-face, remote or, a combination of remote and face-to-face. The SQA website provides details on [alternative assessment sites and remote assessment](#).

# 1 Policy statement

Customised units and qualifications will be validated by SQA and may be assessed in languages other than English where SQA approves this prior to any development and delivery taking place.

Language of assessment refers to the language used by a learner *in* their assessment. It does not refer to the assessment *of* languages, for example, modern languages.

SQA is committed to equality of opportunity and to a culture that respects difference. We believe that, as an employer and public body, we can play a leading part in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion by making them an integral part of our decision making. This policy has an Equality Impact Assessment completed on it at the development stage to assess how this policy may impact on equality groups and the findings from this are reflected in this policy.

## 2 Policy relationship to SQA's governing principles

SQA's governing principles govern how SQA meets its statutory duties and self-regulates its activities. The Language of Assessment in Customised Products Validated by SQA policy supports the following Governing Principles:

- Governing Principle 7:** SQA will ensure that all qualifications and assessments are as fair and accessible as possible and that the needs of candidates are met in the administration of its assessments.
- Governing Principle 10:** SQA will ensure that candidates receive accurate results in the stated timeframe.

## 3 Responsibilities

### Responsibilities of the awarding body:

If the customised units and/or qualifications are to be delivered in a language other than English:

- ◆ SQA must conduct quality assurance processes in line with standard procedures
- ◆ SQA must validate the customised unit(s) and qualification(s)
- ◆ SQA must certificate the unit(s) and qualification(s) and provide a recognition statement indicating that assessment took place in a language other than English
- ◆ SQA must certificate the customised unit(s) and qualification(s) and, if delivered in a language other than English, provide a recognition statement indicating this

## **Responsibilities of the owner of the customised products:**

- ◆ The organisation offering the customised qualification or unit(s) must meet SQA's quality assurance requirements in line with standard procedures.
- ◆ The organisation offering the customised qualification or unit(s) must submit an Alternative Assessment Site Form to SQA's Business Case Group for approval if they wish to offer their qualification in another country or in a language other than the language on the original Business Case. This must be approved by SQA before it can be offered in any other country or language.
- ◆ The organisation offering the customised qualification or unit(s) must comply with SQA's equality and inclusion responsibilities.

## **Responsibilities of the centre:**

If the customised units and/or qualifications are to be delivered in a language other than English:

- ◆ the centre is responsible for identifying an appropriate independent, third-party translator to translate units and qualifications into the required language. This must be in line with SQA's guidance around avoiding conflicts of interest<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ the centre is responsible for ensuring that materials submitted to SQA for remote verification activities are translated into English
- ◆ if a verification visit takes place, the centre is responsible for identifying an appropriate independent, third-party interpreter to facilitate that visit
- ◆ the centre is responsible for all expenses relating to translation and interpretation requirements

## **4 Policy requirements**

SQA must ensure that the assessment of our qualifications is valued and credible with users, partner organisations and the wider community. Therefore, SQA must be satisfied that assessment arrangements are appropriate to protect the integrity of our qualifications, the interests of candidates, and the safety of our staff and appointees.

Customers make requests to have qualifications and units in languages other than English. These Customised units and/or qualifications are approved by SQA, and the language of assessment is set at that point. It is not thereafter possible to assess those customised units and/or qualifications in a language other than the language originally stated, unless a formal request is made and approved by SQA. This must be approved by SQA before the customised product can be offered in any other country or language other than the language approved originally.

The customised units and/or qualifications will be validated by SQA and may be assessed in languages other than English, where SQA have approved this before development and delivery takes place.

If the customised units and/or qualifications are to be delivered in a language other than English, paper certificates and any electronic statements of certification will indicate where the assessment took place in a language other than English. This will be done by including a

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<sup>1</sup> [SQA Systems Verification Criteria - Guidance for centres](#)

recognition statement. This recognition statement will be generic and will not identify which language the assessment took place in.

## 4.1 Exclusions

### Scottish Vocational Qualifications

Due to the regulated nature of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) it is not possible for these to be delivered outside of the United Kingdom.

## 5 Definitions

<b>Alternative assessment site:</b>	An alternative assessment site is premises owned and operated by a different organisation, and not by the approved centre. It could be in the same country as the main site of the centre or in another country.
<b>Centre:</b>	An organisation (such as a school, college, training provider or place of employment) that is approved by and accountable to an awarding body for the examination and assessment arrangements leading to a qualification award.
<b>Customised products:</b>	A customised award or unit; a unique qualification designed by an organisation to meet that organisation's needs, and is quality assured by SQA.
<b>Language of assessment:</b>	This is the language used by a learner in their assessment. It does not refer to the assessment of languages, for example, modern languages.
<b>Learner:</b>	An individual who pursues a course of study independently but makes an entry and takes an assessment at an approved SQA centre. May also be referred to as a 'candidate'.
<b>Owner:</b>	An organisation (such as a charity and social enterprise, trade association, college, training company, local authority or government department) that is an SQA customer and designs the content and structure of a privately owned qualification to meet their organisational needs.

## **6 SQA policies and legislation**

### **Related SQA policies include:**

- ◆ Language of Assessment and Certification in Units and Qualifications Validated by SQA (delivered in the United Kingdom)
- ◆ Language of Assessment and Certification in Regulated Qualifications offered by SQA (delivered in the United Kingdom)
- ◆ Language of Assessment and Certification in Units and Qualifications offered Internationally and Validated by SQA
- ◆ Equality of Access Policy