

Understanding micro-credentials and small qualifications in Scotland

Case study: Credit rating micro-credentials

Edinburgh College

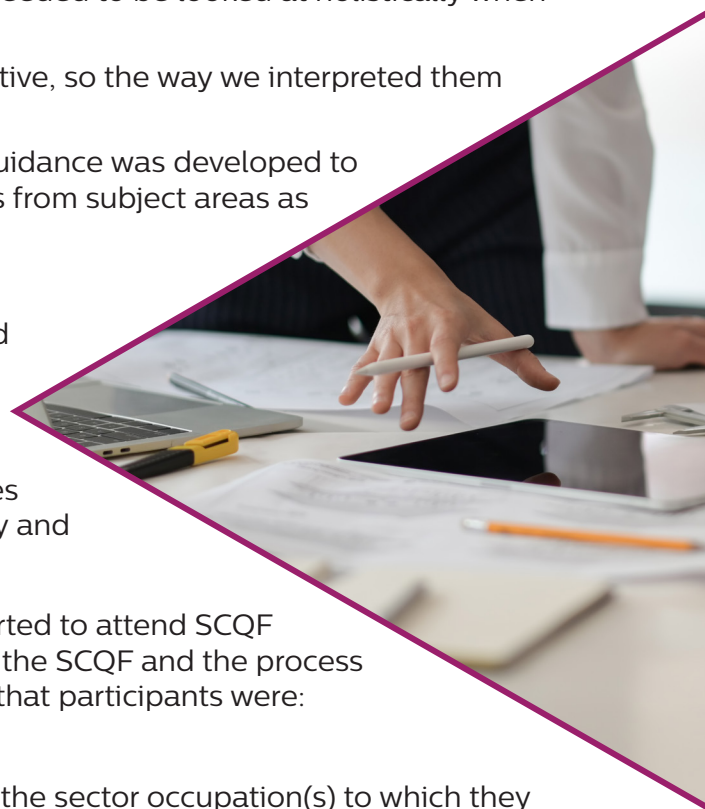
This case study outlines Edinburgh College's experience as a credit-rating body for micro-credentials, the processes undertaken and related internal staff development.

The first thing we found was that levelling for the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) is not an exact science. We had to always consider the following:

- credit rating requires a 'best fit' so the qualifications needed to be looked at holistically when deciding levels
- the SCQF level descriptors are indicative, not prescriptive, so the way we interpreted them had to be sound
- professional judgement is needed – sector-specific guidance was developed to have a constant nucleus of a team, drawing in experts from subject areas as required
- evidence to support decisions was recorded
- paperwork relating to judgements was completed and stored for the lifetime of the awards; as we already have very robust processes within the College, this was one area where we had no concerns
- the Quality Enhancement (QE) unit oversees and takes part in all credit-rating activities to ensure consistency and allow for quality control.

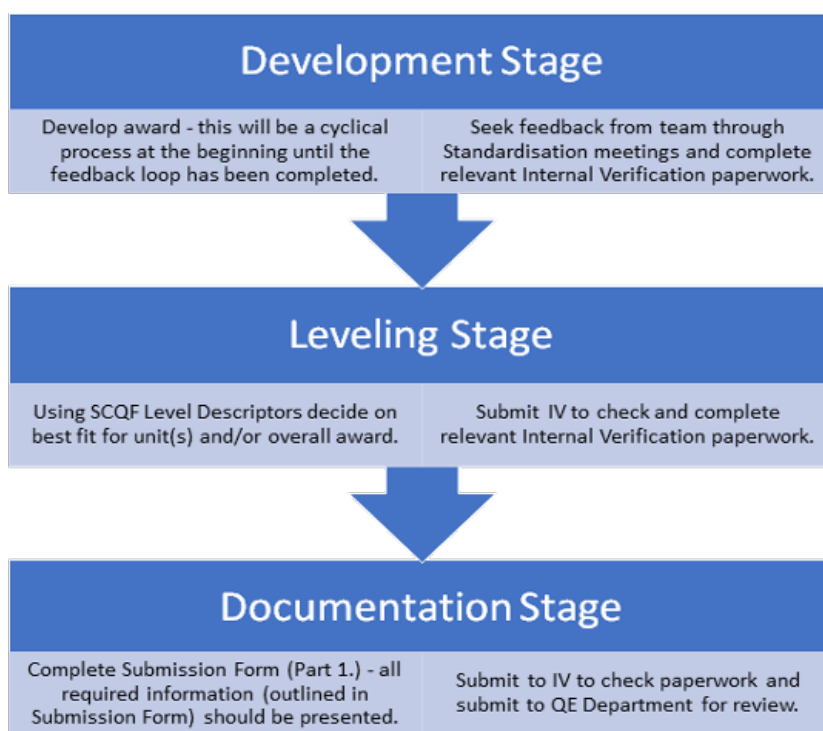
All staff involved in the credit-rating process were supported to attend SCQF workshops to enhance their understanding of the role of the SCQF and the process of credit rating. Staff development enabled us to ensure that participants were:

- familiar with the SCQF level descriptors
- knowledgeable about the qualification, the units and the sector occupation(s) to which they relate as well as intended learner profiles
- unbiased and capable of acting objectively
- able to reach balanced judgements on the basis of experience and the analysis of relevant information
- able to clearly record how decisions have been reached in a manner that is auditable and shows familiarity with the relevant proposed unit(s) and the award contents and requirements.



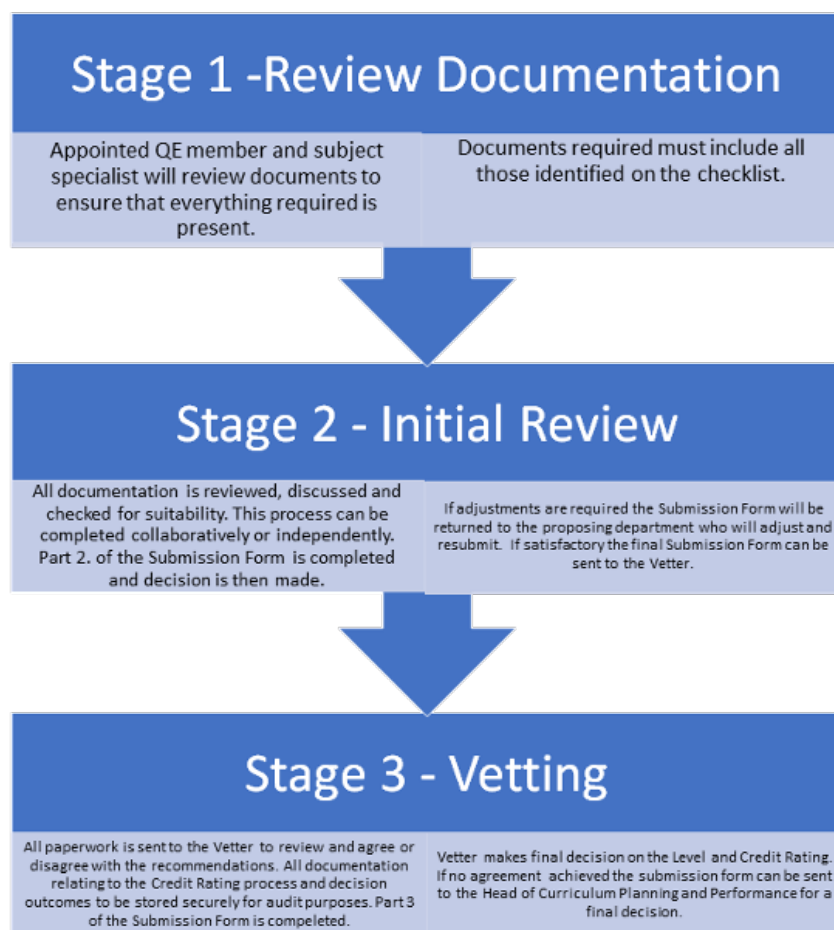
Next, we developed a process that was easy to understand to those submitting awards for credit rating. We separated this into two phases. The first, the pre-submission phase in outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Overarching flowchart of the pre-submission phase



The second phase includes a full review of the documentation and vetting from subject specialist(s), a member of QE and an independent vetter, as outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Review phase



All documentation has an associated checklist to ensure everything has been included from submission through to final approval, though we recognise that this is not always a straight line and that at any point there would be a cyclical process to support recommendations and improvement.

Once this process has been fully completed, the award will be added to the SCQF database and will enter a yearly review cycle to ensure it always remains fit for purpose. Moderation will be carried out by the QE team and standardisation meetings carried out to support this process.

Finally, registration and certification will follow normal College procedures and appropriate records kept for regulatory bodies.

More information

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Find out more

This case study is one of a series published as part of the 'Understanding micro-credentials and small qualifications in Scotland' project from the Resilient Learning Communities Enhancement Theme.

Following from the establishment of the Scottish Tertiary Education Micro-credentials Network and the production of the Scottish Tertiary Education Micro-credentials Glossary in 2021-22, the project continues to explore micro-credential practice in Scotland in 2022-23 and the development of a good practice guide.

You can find further case studies and resources on the [project website](#).

Published by QAA, and produced by the sector and QAA Scotland, this resource has been commissioned by the Scottish Funding Council to support its duty to secure provision for assessing and enhancing the quality of fundable further and higher education provision.



Published - March 2023

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18 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 6NU
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786
www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk