



CERTIFICATION POLICY



Version Number	Date	Purpose of Change	Classification	Sign Off
V4.1	09/10/2025	Merge of EPA and Awarding policy new content and formatting	Public	Lesley Barr

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1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1. This policy outlines Smart Awards' approach to the registration, certification, replacement, validation, and withdrawal of certificates for all qualifications and apprenticeship assessments offered by Smart Awards.

1.2. It applies to:

- All Smart Awards staff and contractors involved in qualification delivery, assessment, and quality assurance.
- All approved Centres delivering Smart Awards qualifications.
- All Learners registered for Smart Awards qualifications.

1.3. Smart Awards is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of this policy comply with its legal, regulatory, and ethical obligations, including those set out in the Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition and Qualifications Scotland Accreditation Principles.

1.4. Smart Awards has overall accountability for ensuring that:

- Certificates are issued accurately, securely, and only to learners who have demonstrated the required level of attainment.
- The integrity of the certification process is maintained at all times.
- All Centres comply with this policy and associated procedures.

1.5. Smart Awards' senior management team has day-to-day responsibility for implementing, monitoring, and reviewing this policy. All queries regarding its interpretation or application should be directed to info@smartawards.co.uk

2. LEARNER REGISTRATION (Qualifications)

2.1. Approved Centres are responsible for registering learners for Smart Awards qualifications via the Smart Awards Management System (Quartz Web).

2.2. Centres may only register learners for qualifications for which they hold current Smart Awards approval.

2.3. Learner registration data must be accurate, complete, and securely maintained in line with Smart Awards' Data Protection Policy and Ofqual Condition D4 (Managing risks to the integrity of assessments).

2. APPRENTICE REGISTRATION (Apprenticeship)

2.1. Initial Notification - The Training Provider or Employer notifies Smart Awards of their intent to register an apprentice for EPA upon enrolment to the apprenticeship standard. Notification must be made using the Smart Awards EPA Registration Form or via the ACE360 platform.

2.2. Submission of Registration Data - The Training Provider must provide the following details for each apprentice:

- Full legal name (as it should appear on the certificate);
- Unique Learner Number (ULN);
- Date of birth;
- Employer name and contact details;
- Apprenticeship standard and level;
- Expected EPA gateway date;
- Confirmation of the selected assessment pathway (if applicable).

2.3. All information must be submitted within 8 weeks of programme commencement or earlier if agreed with Smart Awards.

2.4. .3 Data Validation - Smart Awards will verify the information received for completeness, accuracy, and eligibility. Any discrepancies or missing data will be reported back to the Training Provider for correction before registration is confirmed. Once validated, Smart Awards will issue confirmation of registration via email or through ACE360.

2.5 Record Management - All registration data will be securely stored and managed in accordance with Smart Awards' Data Protection Policy. Changes to apprentice details must be notified immediately in writing or through ACE360.

3. CERTIFICATION OF LEARNERS (Qualifications)

3.1. When a learner has successfully completed a qualification, the Centre must enter the achievement details into Quartz Web.

3.2. Smart Awards will verify all learner and assessment information for accuracy and completeness before approving certification.

3.3. Certificates will be generated only once all mandatory information is correctly entered and verified in Quartz Web. The system prevents certification where mandatory fields are incomplete or inconsistent.

3.4. If a Centre cannot progress to certification or identifies errors in submitted data, they must contact info@smartawards.co.uk for support. Smart Awards will issue certificates within five (5) working days of receiving accurate and verified information.

3.5. Certificates are issued electronically ("e-certificates") unless a physical certificate is specifically requested. Physical certificates may incur additional administrative costs.

4. CERTIFICATION OF APPRENTICES (Apprenticeship)

4.1. Training providers must share accurate and relevant information with Smart Awards for certification to take place for apprenticeship assessments.

4.2. Certificates for apprenticeship standards will be requested by Smart Awards from the Apprenticeships Assessment Service who will notify employers when an apprentice has passed apprenticeship assessment.

4.3. On the successful achievement of the apprenticeship assessment the Apprentice will be issued with a certificate which will include the grade achieved in the assessment. Providers must record assessment achievements promptly in the individual learner record. The certificate will be issued by the Apprenticeship Assessment Service claimed by Smart Awards as the registered Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation. Certificates are issued direct to the employer by the Apprentices Assessment Service.

4.4. Replacement and withdrawal of certificates will be issued in line with the Apprenticeship Assessment Service guidance.

5. CERTIFICATE CONTENT (Qualifications)

5.1. All Smart Awards certificates will contain information required under Ofqual Condition E4.1,

including but not limited to:

- Qualification title and reference number
- Learner's full legal name
- Date of achievement
- Smart Awards unique certificate reference number and QR code for validation
- Units achieved (where applicable)
- Regulator's logo (for regulated qualifications only)

5.2. The design and format of the certificate are protected to prevent unauthorised reproduction or misuse.

6. CERTIFICATE CONTENT (Apprenticeship)

6.1. Apprenticeship certificates are issued direct to the employer by the Apprentices Assessment Service.

7. REPLACEMENT CERTIFICATES (Qualifications)

7.1. A replacement EPA certificate may be requested where:

- The original certificate has been lost, stolen, or damaged.
- The certificate contains incorrect details (e.g. name spelling error).
- The certificate has been withdrawn and reissued following correction or appeals outcomes.

7.2. Replacement certificates cannot be issued:

- To change a learner's grade or outcome.
- For reasons unrelated to legitimate loss, error, or correction.

7.3. Smart Awards will issue replacement certificates where possible, upon receipt of a written request and payment of the relevant fee.

7.4. Requests must be sent to info@smartawards.co.uk and include sufficient learner identification and details of the original certificate.

7.5. Replacement certificates will be issued within five (5) working days of receiving payment and verified details.

7.6. Unless a replacement is requested directly by the learner, certificates will be issued to the relevant Centre for distribution.

8. REPLACEMENT CERTIFICATES (Apprenticeship)

8.1. A replacement EPA certificate may be requested where:

- The original certificate has been lost, stolen, or damaged.
- The certificate contains incorrect details (e.g. name spelling error).
- The certificate has been withdrawn and reissued following correction or appeals outcomes.

8.2. Replacement certificates cannot be issued:

- To change a learner's grade or outcome.
- For reasons unrelated to legitimate loss, error, or correction.

8.3. Who Can Apply - A replacement apprenticeship certificate may be requested by:

- The employer (as the certificate recipient).
- The training provider (with employer authorisation).
- The apprentice (with employer consent).

6. LOST CERTIFICATES

6.1. Certificates are issued to the Centre that registered the learner. Learners who have not received their certificate must contact their Centre in the first instance.

6.2. If the Centre is no longer operational, learners should contact info@smartawards.co.uk with evidence of achievement.

7. WITHDRAWAL OF CERTIFICATES

7.1. Smart Awards reserves the right to withhold, suspend, or withdraw certification if:

- Evidence of malpractice or maladministration is identified.
- The Centre or learner is found to have breached Smart Awards or Ofqual policies.
- Assessment decisions are deemed invalid following investigation.

7.2. In such cases, Smart Awards may:

- Prescribe corrective actions with a reasonable implementation timeframe (normally one month).
- Withdraw affected certificates from the Smart Awards Management System and notify relevant regulatory and awarding bodies.

7.3. Learners or Centres must return withdrawn certificates to Smart Awards immediately upon request. Withdrawals will also be recorded on Quartz Web.

8. CERTIFICATE VALIDATION (Qualifications)

8.1. Each Smart Awards certificate contains a unique QR code and identification number that allows validation through Smart Awards' online verification system.

8.2. Scanning the QR code or entering the certificate number online will confirm authenticity and qualification details.

9. COMPLAINTS

9.1. Learners who wish to make a complaint or appeal regarding certification should first contact their Centre.

9.2. If the issue cannot be resolved by the Centre, learners may escalate the matter to Smart Awards via info@smartawards.co.uk

9.3. All complaints and appeals will be handled in accordance with:

- Complaints Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

10. DATA PROTECTION

10.1. All learner data collected for certification purposes is managed in compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Smart Awards' Data Protection Policy.

10.2. Personal data is used solely for legitimate awarding purposes, including registration, certification, and quality assurance.

11. REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

11.1. This policy is reviewed and revised annually in response to feedback, changes in legislation and guidance from the regulators.

10. PROCESS FOR CERTIFICATE CLAIMS (Qualifications)

Process Step Description	Process	Person or team responsible	Organisation Responsibility
Submit certificate claim via Quartz Web	Process	Centre administrator	Centre
Check certificate claim for acturaries	Process	Admin team	Smart Awards
Award certificate or return claim to centre to amend	Decision	Admin team holds responsibility and experience to make decisions and apply suitable actions.	Smart Awards
Send electronic learner certificate via Quartz Web	Process	Admin team	Smart Awards

11. OFQUAL GENERAL CONDITIONS

2.1. B3.2: For the purposes of this condition, such events may include those where – (f) the awarding organisation has issued incorrect results or certificates.

2.2. I3.1: An awarding organisation must ensure that the design of each certificate in relation to a qualification which it makes available complies with the Certificate Requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

2.3. I3.2: An awarding organisation must ensure that – (a) all certificates which it issues clearly and uniquely identify both the Learner and the certificate itself, (b) all certificates which it issues clearly display the title of the qualification as it appears on the Register (and any Endorsement known after the qualification is submitted to the Register) and do not include any other title for the qualification.

2.4. I3.3: Where an awarding organisation issues any replacement certificate, it must ensure that the certificate is clearly identifiable as being a replacement.

2.5. I3.4: Where an awarding organisation issues a certificate in relation to a qualification and – (a) the assessment of the qualification was in a language other than English, and (b) the objective of the qualification was not for the Learner to gain skills in, or knowledge or understanding of that language, the awarding organisation must ensure that the language of the assessment is clearly identifiable on the certificate.

2.6. I4.1: An awarding organisation must, in relation to qualifications which it makes available – (a) publish the expected dates or timescales for the issue of certificates, (b) ensure that the issue of certificates is timely, (c) issue only certificates which are clear and readily capable of being understood by Users of qualifications, (d) issue only certificates which are accurate and complete

and which reflect accurate and complete results, (e) maintain a record of all certificates and replacement certificates which it issues, and (f) not include a qualification which is not a regulated qualification on a certificate which contains regulated qualifications.

2.7. 14.2: An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps, including having procedures in place, to ensure that it – (a) issues a certificate and any replacement certificate to any Learner who has a valid entitlement to that certificate or replacement certificate, (b) does not issue any certificate to a Learner who does not have a valid entitlement to that certificate, (c) revokes any certificate if the result on the certificate is false because of malpractice, maladministration, or is revealed to be inaccurate as a consequence of an appeals process, and (d) meets any date or timescale published by it in respect of the issue of certificates and replacement certificates.

9.5. PR1.1 An awarding organisation must conduct its activities in a way that is designed to facilitate its adherence to the following principles:

(b) Principle 2 – An awarding organisation must treat Learners fairly by acting and taking decisions with due impartiality and based on appropriate evidence.

(e) Principle 5 – An awarding organisation must act in an open, transparent and co-operative manner with Ofqual and, as appropriate, with Users of qualifications.

12. OFQUAL ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS

12.1. EPA5.1 In respect of each EPA which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

(a) comply with the terms of any written notice served by Ofqual requiring the awarding organisation to provide Ofqual with information, and

(b) comply with any requirements specified to it by Ofqual in relation to the qualification.

13. QUALIFICATIONS SCOTLAND ACCREDITATION PRINCIPLES

13.1. Principle 5. The awarding body shall provide clear information on its procedures, products and services and ensure that they are accurate and appropriate to SQA accredited qualifications.

13.2. Principle 15. The awarding body must have effective, reliable, and secure systems for the registration and certification of learners.