

# **The Qualification Journey from the National Database of Accredited Provision (NDAQ<sup>1</sup>) to Publication on the Learning Aim Database**

## **Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and National Qualifications Framework (NQF)**

### **Guidance and Information**

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<sup>1</sup> Shortly to be replaced by the Register of Regulated Qualifications

**Date: 01 October 2010**

Audience details: Colleges and providers, AoC and ALP members

## Introduction

This note describes the stages in the qualification journey with a starting point of checking for accreditation. It is intended to provide information on the current Skills Funding Agency post 19 funding confirmation processes, which commenced on 1 April 2010 when Section 97 was repealed, leading to the published data source on the Learning Aim Database. It includes:

1. a diagram illustrating the Skills Funding Agency qualifications funding confirmation process
2. a) a visual step-by-step guide to track a Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) qualification  
b) detailed step by step information on how to check a QCF qualification on the journey to accreditation and funding approval
3. a) a visual step-by-step guide to track a National Qualification Framework (NQF) qualification – including the journey to QCF transition:
  - NQF provision that has had funding ceased from the 31 July for new starters
  - NQF provision that is due to have funding ceased for new starters from 31 December
  - NQF provision the Skills Funding Agency will continue to fund.b) detailed step by step information on how to check a NQF qualification on the journey and what to do after funding has ceased for the qualification.
4. Related links for further information.

The intended audience for this note includes further education stakeholders, particularly providers and awarding organisations.

## Provision in Scope

The Skills Funding Agency, funding confirmation process covers all publicly-funded provision for learners aged 19 and above in England. The Skills Funding Agency is responsible for confirming the following categories of provision for public funding:

- a. vocational qualifications in the QCF. Qualifications within the QCF will be confirmed for funding for one or more of the Agency's delivery programmes (Adult Learning Responsive (ALR), Offender Learning and Skills Services (OLASS), Train to Gain, and Programmes for the Unemployed)<sup>2</sup>.
- b. QCF units for inclusion in the ongoing QCF flexible delivery unit funding trials
- c. non-vocational qualifications in the QCF
- d. certain categories of National Qualification Framework (NQF) provision – A Levels, Functional Skills, GCSEs, Skills for Life
- e. other provision (including Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) recognised access to Higher Education)

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<sup>2</sup> Apprenticeships are subject to separate arrangements.

Some QCF provision does not receive public funding because the qualification:

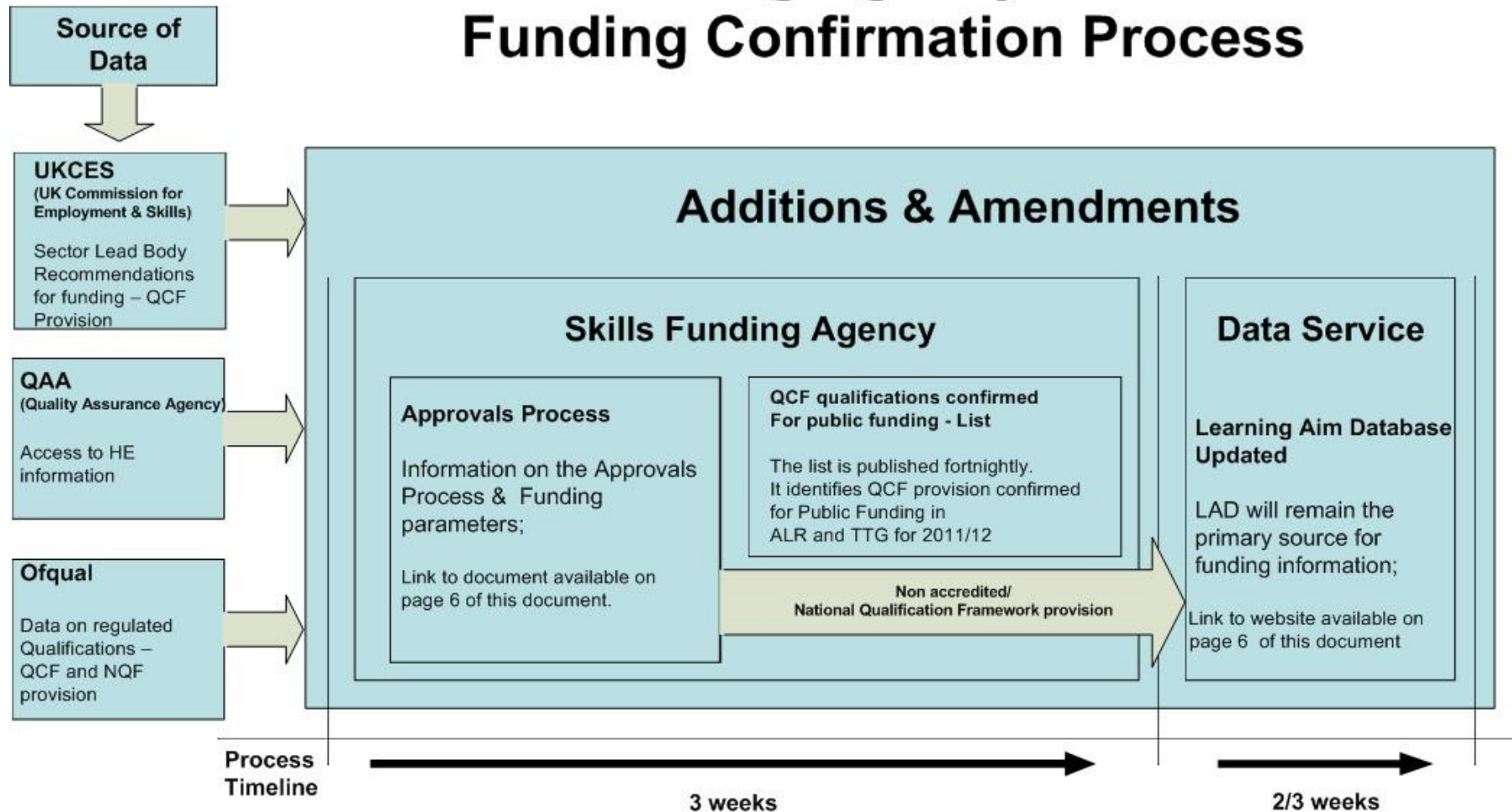
- is not supported by the relevant Sector Skills Council (SSC)
- is not aligned to the Agency's funding parameters
- falls under the ineligible category. Further information can be found in the document [Funding Parameters General Guidance](#).

## **Skills Funding Agency Confirmation Process**

The Agency's funding confirmation process has been designed to replace section 97 and took effect on 1 April 2010. The confirmation process supports the Agency's commitment to the QCF through the transition phase from funding provision on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to the QCF. For vocational qualifications the Agency takes account of advice received from the relevant Sector Skills Council. It is acknowledged that the NQF will continue to exist and the Agency will continue to fund some non vocational and non accredited provision.

For further guidance of how this is achieved, and what will happen at each stage of the process, this document should be read in conjunction with the [Approval Process document](#) and [Managing Transition from NQF to QCF](#).

# 1. Skills Funding Agency Qualifications Funding Confirmation Process

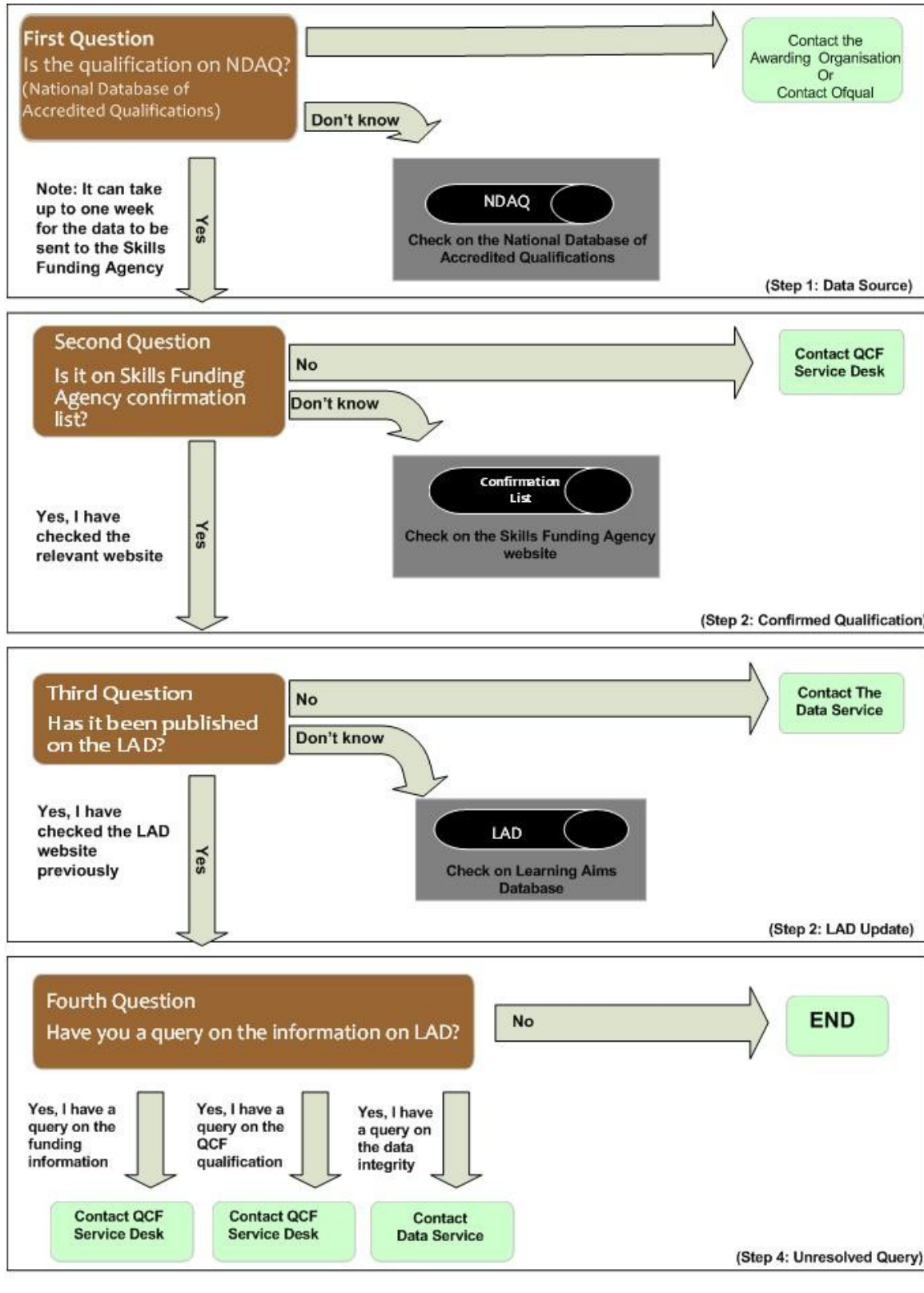


Note: The target turnaround time within Skills Funding Agency will be a maximum of 5/6 weeks from the point of receiving endorsement from the Sector Skills Body and information from Ofqual. This can take longer in exceptional cases where further information is required to make a decision.

# 2a. Qualification and Credit Framework

## Visual Step-by-Step Guide to Track a Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) qualification

(to be read in conjunction with steps to take in the QCF journey)



## **2b. Steps to take to check where a QCF qualification is in the journey to accreditation and funding approval**

The following steps provide additional details to support the Visual Step-by-Step Guide 2a. Each step provides summary detail along with related links to further information in the process.

### **Step 1: Data Source**

During the transition to QCF it is particularly important to use awarding organisations as a data source. Awarding organisations will be able to advise on what they are intending to develop and what stage the qualification development is at.

Another available source which can be searched to check for published details of regulated qualifications, including details of recognised Awarding Organisations is [National Database of Accredited Qualifications](#) (NDAQ)<sup>3</sup>. Specific queries should be sent by e-mail to [Ofqual](#).

### **Step 2: Confirmed Qualification**

To check whether a qualification has been approved and confirmed for public funding search the [QCF Qualification confirmed for public funding list](#)

Specific queries should be sent by e-mail to the [QCF Service Desk](#) or call 0870 267 0054.

### **Step 3: LAD update**

To check the funding status for a QCF qualification search on the [LAD](#).

If the funding information is still not showing on the LAD 2-3 weeks after being listed on the confirmed funding list then e-mail the [Data Service](#).

### **Step 4: Unresolved query**

If the qualification has been published on the LAD but you have a query on a QCF qualification then please e-mail the [QCF Service Desk](#) or phone on 0870 267 0054. Alternatively if the query is around data integrity, contact the [Data Service](#).

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<sup>3</sup> Will be superseded by the Register of Regulated Qualifications in late October 2010



### **3b. Step-by-Step NQF Journey including QCF Transition**

The Agency has stated its commitment to focus funding on provision from the QCF and to move towards funding a comprehensive QCF offer from January 2011. This journey takes into consideration a number of scenarios including ceasing publicly funded NQF qualifications. The following steps provide additional details to support the Visual Step-by-Step Guide 3a. Each step provides summary detail along with related links to further information in the process.

#### **Step 1: Data Source**

During the transition to QCF it is particularly important to use awarding organisations as a data source. Awarding organisations will be able to advise on what they are intending to develop and what stage the qualification development is at.

Another available source which can be searched to check for published details of regulated qualifications, including details of recognised Awarding Organisations is [National Database of Accredited Qualifications](#). Specific queries relating to NDAQ should be sent by e-mail to [Ofqual](#).

#### **Step 2: Confirmation of funding**

[Guidance on managing the transition from NQF to QCF](#) will give a staged approach to checking NQF and QCF lists published by the Agency. To check the funding status for a QCF qualification search on the [LAD](#).

If the Qualification has been published on the LAD and you have a query on the funding information in the LAD then please e-mail the [QCF Service Desk](#) or phone on 0870 267 0054.

#### **Step 3: Withdrawal and transition to QCF**

If there is no funding status showing on the LAD, check if the funding has been withdrawn. The [NQF Qualifications Confirmed for Withdrawal of Public Funding list](#) sets out those NQF qualifications where funding for new starts from 31 July 2010 ceased and NQF qualifications where funding will cease from 31 December.

The Agency will review whether funding can cease for all new starts on all remaining vocational NQF provision in January 2011.

If the qualification is not listed on the NQF Qualification Confirmed for Withdrawal of Public Funding then please e-mail the [QCF Service Desk](#) or phone on 0870 267 0054.

If the qualification is listed on the NQF Qualification Confirmed for Withdrawal of Public Funding the following steps need to be taken:

- [Guidance on managing the transition from NQF to QCF](#) paper offers an update on the process for the transition from funding qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to funding qualifications on the

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) *for learners aged 19 and over in England*. This document is to be used in conjunction with the Qualification Journey. It offers guidance and information of what you need to do next once the above steps have been followed.

- Find an alternative QCF replacement on the confirmed [list](#).

#### **4. Related links**

The following is a list of useful links to publications and resources to support with the implementation of the QCF programme and the transition from NQF to QCF.

##### **Confirmation Process**

A summary of the new arrangements for the confirmation of public funding for qualifications delivered to learners aged 19 and above in England is in [Agency Funding Confirmation Process](#).

##### **Guidance and Information for Learning Providers**

The document is produced at a time in the transition period that takes account of the publication in June of the first list confirming withdrawal of funding for National Qualification Framework (NQF) qualifications and the outcomes following the challenge process. Providers will need to be familiar with the progress of QCF qualifications which attract public funding and the NQF qualifications being withdrawn from public funding: [Provider Guidance](#).

##### **QCF Policy Update published August 2010**

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) Policy Update is the fifth in a series of regular communications from the Skills Funding Agency (the Agency). The next update is planned for the end of November 2010: [QCF Policy Update](#).

##### **QCF Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

The FAQ document has been produced by the Skills Funding Agency's Qualifications and Credit Framework team to sit alongside other materials and resources developed to support the implementation of QCF for providers and other stakeholders, specifically in the context of managing the transition from funding qualifications on the NQF to funding qualifications on the QCF: [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

##### **iGuide**

The iGuide is an interactive introductory guide to the QCF, developed to help learning providers, careers advisers and awarding organisations support the learners they are working with: [QCF iGuide](#).

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