



**Skills &
Education
Group Awards**

Claiming Certification Policy

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1. General

- 1.1 This Skills and Education Group Awards policy sets out the rules and conditions for claiming certificates.
- 1.2 It is the Centre's responsibility to claim achievements for its learners where a qualification has an internal assessment. Centres must have appropriate systems in place to ensure that claims are valid and correct. Invalid, incorrect, or fraudulent claims will be referred as Malpractice or Maladministration and Centres may be subject to sanctions as a result.
- 1.3 Valid claims can be made at any time of year. Once a Centre's claim has been authorised by Skills and Education Group Awards, certificates will be issued within 10 working days and will be despatched to the Centre which initially enrolled the learners unless we have been notified otherwise. Certificates can take the form of paper and/or electronic.
- 1.4 Claims for qualifications or units should be made through the ORS platform, in line with Skills and Education Group Awards guidance (which can be found by clicking 'help' on the ORS site).

2. Incorrect / Fraudulent Claims

- 2.1 Claims for certification that are proved invalid, incorrect, or fraudulent will be treated by Skills and Education Group Awards in accordance with its policy on Malpractice and Maladministration and proven cases may result in sanctions against the Centre. Serious cases will be notified to the Regulators and other Awarding Organisations which may have an interest in the units /qualifications or products claimed.

3. Direct Claims

- 3.1 Direct Claims allows Centres to claim certification without an External Quality assurance activity so long as the learners have been assessed as meeting all the required assessment criteria and the assessment process has been internally quality assured and documented.
- 3.2 Skills and Education Group Awards will determine the suitability of each qualification for Direct Claims. Some qualifications will not allow Direct Claims to be made.
- 3.3 Approval for DCS relates to individual qualifications and is never considered to be valid across a Centre's entire provision.

- 3.4 We do not recognise DCS granted to a Centre by another Awarding Organisation.
- 3.5 Newly recognised Centres will not qualify for DCS in the first year of operation unless sufficient evidence of quality assurance can be demonstrated.
- 3.6 Centres may not apply for DCS. They are awarded DCS based on quality criteria that are reported by our External Quality Assurers following external quality assurance activity. Any recommendations submitted by our External Quality Assurers need to be agreed and approved.
- 3.7 Once DCS approval is granted Centres can claim certification for learners without external moderation for up to a maximum period of 12 months.
- 3.7.1 This period may be shorter and is dependent upon the volume of enrolments within any 12 month period.
- 3.7.2 Centres are notified of DCS if approval is given following a successful series external quality assurance. This notification will include the qualifications to which DCS applies and the period for which DCS is applicable.
- 3.8 Centres which incur actions through external quality assurance will not necessarily have their DCS removed. However, we will remove DCS if:
- any previous quality assurance actions have not been completed and a level 2 sanction is applied;
 - external quality assurance outcomes impact on the integrity of the qualification e.g. assessment tasks are not fit for purpose; the centre's assessment decisions are not agreed; centre staff are deemed unqualified;
 - the centre is unable to produce assessment and internal quality assurance documentation either for
 - courses being quality assured at the time or
 - for courses previously allowed DCS;
- 3.9 Any appeal against the removal of DCS will go through our Appeals policy.

4. Checking Certificates

- 4.1 Once in receipt of certificates, Centres are requested to check all certificates for accuracy before releasing them to learners. If any incorrect certificates are received, we must be notified, and the incorrect certificates must be returned to us immediately with an explanation/reason for the error.
- 4.2 It is the Centre's responsibility to ensure that every effort is made to deliver certificates to learners without undue delay. Any enquiries received from learners about the status of their certificate claims will be referred to the Centre.
- 4.3 In cases where certificates are unclaimed by learners, centres should follow their own policy on the retention/disposal of any certificates unclaimed by learners.

5. Certificate Re-issue

- 5.1 A certificate is re-issued where:

5.1.1 Certificates are lost in transit between Skills and Education Group Awards and the Centre.

We will investigate the loss with the postal / courier service and bear the cost of any replacement. If certificates are re-issued and the originals are later recovered, the re-issued certificates must be returned to us.

5.1.2 Certificates are lost in transit between the Centre and the learner.

The Centre is responsible for investigating the loss with the postal / courier service and will bear the cost of any re-issue. If certificates are reissued and an original is later recovered, the re-issued certificate must be returned to us.

5.1.3 Certificates are damaged in transit between Skills and Education Group Awards and the Centre.

These must be returned to us with the original packaging before certificates can be re-issued. We will bear the cost of re-issue.

5.1.4 Certificates are damaged in transit between the Centre and the Learner.

These must be returned to us before certificates can be re-issued. The Centre will bear the cost of re-issue.

5.1.5 Certificates have been printed with spelling errors.

Certificates must be returned to us before certificates can be re-issued. The Centre will bear the cost of re-issue.

5.1.6 Centres have made an error when claiming.

Certificates must be returned to us with full details of how the error occurred before certificates can be re-issued. The cost for re-issue will be charged to the Centre. All such errors will be logged as Maladministration against the Centre and the Centre's Head of Quality will be requested to investigate the circumstances. Persistent failure to rectify such errors may result in sanctions against the Centre.

5.1.7 Centres have not received certificates in the timescales expected.

Centres must notify Skills and Education Group Awards in writing giving the following information:

- Learner name(s) or learner number(s);
- Course ID(s);
- Date of claim;
- Confirming that a full check of their premises has been made to ensure certificates have not been received.

Skills and Education Group Awards will investigate the issue and then confirm the action(s) to be taken.

5.2 All requests for re-issue of certificates must be submitted to us within 3 months of the original certification date, after this date learners will be required to request a replacement certificate – See section 5.

6. Replacement Certificates/Letters of Verification

6.1 We will issue a replacement paper certificate and/or electronic certificate for any award made in the previous ten full academic years.

6.2 A certificate may be replaced, or a letter of verification issued when:

- an individual learner has lost the original certificate;
- an individual learner has damaged the original certificate.

6.3 We will not issue a replacement certificate or letter of verification with a name change as a result of marriage or name change by deed poll.

- 6.4 We can provide a replacement certificate or letter of verification with a name change where this is as result of;
- gender reassignment.
 - a learner who enters a Witness Protection Scheme as informed by a Police Officer / Solicitor.

A replacement certificate or letter of verification will only be issued once the name has been legally changed and we have received confirmation of this.

- 6.5 Requests for replacement certificates or letters of verification can only be made by learners and must be made on the current R6 Replacement Certificate Application form available on our website.
- 6.6 All claims for replacement certificates / verification letters are checked and authenticated before replacements / letters are issued and are subject to a fee, payable in advance.
- 6.7 All such certificates will bear the word 'Replacement' in line with the Regulators' Conditions of Recognition.

7. Authentication of Certificates/Letters of Verification

- 7.1 To minimise the risk of fraudulent copies of certificates, our certificates include a number of advanced security features.
- 7.2 If the certificate contains a QR code, this can be scanned with a smart device to verify the authenticity of the certificate.
- 7.3 We will consider any request to authenticate award documents and will investigate any potential claims of counterfeit awards. All such enquiries will be processed in line with data protection requirements and should be made to the Customer Support Team on 0115 8541 620 or emailed to customersupport@skillsedugroup.co.uk

8. Quality Assurance

- 8.1 This policy is reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our Regulators.

Version	Description of change	Approval	Date of Issue
2024 V1	Complete overhaul of previous policy	SLT	December 2024