



The information authority

Paper 4: Update on the QCF

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1. What are we asking the board to do?

This paper updates the board on Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) development and implementation, covering short term interim arrangements and medium term full implementation.

It also requests views on how the board and its sub groups can provide review and input throughout on the data implications of the QCF services to be designed and implemented.

At this juncture, LSC is not asking *the information authority* to play an active role in setting and regulating standards for QCF data returns from Awarding Organisations.

2. Background

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) 'opened for business' in August 2008 with the publication of the Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (August 2008). It will become the qualifications framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland and will replace the national qualifications Framework (NQF). The QCF is a unit based credit and qualification framework; initially focussed on adult, but also encompassing the Foundation Learning Tier and therefore includes entry and level 1 provision for 14-19 year olds. Population of the QCF with units and qualifications will take place over the next two years. During this time the systems and services to support the operation of the QCF will be put in place.

It is anticipated that by 2010 the QCF will be more or less complete and will have replaced the current National Qualifications Framework (NQF). There will be a three-year transition period to the QCF and during this period the LSC will be funding a mixed economy of QCF and NQF provision, placing increasing emphasis on the delivery and gradual shift to QCF provision as it becomes available.

There have been two years of tests and trials led by QCA which tested prototype systems to support the operation of QCF.

The Full Business Case for the implementation of QCF and associated business model was submitted to DIUS by QCA at the end of September. Alongside this, the LSC were requested to conduct a feasibility and impact assessment of the Service Layer of the Model and consider how LSC could manage this.

LSC will have 2 roles in implementing QCF:

- 1) As the organisation responsible for the management of the Service Layer which will provide services across all QCF learning, both publicly and privately funded across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 2) As the planning and funding body for post-16 learning in England and the responsibility for the wider implementation of the QCF across the FE sector.

Implications and benefits are set out under these headings throughout the paper so that the board can differentiate where changes arise from the introduction of QCF per se and

where they arise as a result of changes to planning, funding and performance arrangements for QCF for publicly funded learning in England.

The board should also be aware that the recent announcement by the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills for SME flexibilities through the Train to Gain offer is focussed predominantly on QCF units and thin qualifications – this means that implementation of the QCF, and of limited trials of unit funding, reporting and recording will begin to take place from December 2008.

The introduction of QCF, the Service Layer and the associated funding arrangements has curriculum and learner driven benefits. It is not a data driven policy but does have implications for data.

3. Implementation of the QCF

3.1 Unit Funding

Alongside the recent announcement for SME flexibilities, LSC is also taking forward unit funding trials of QCF provision across the Learner Responsive and Adult Responsive funding models. This has been approved by DIUS and will also support providers involved in the unit funding trials. The trials are planned to start January 2009 and the first phase will end 31 July 2009. Evaluation arrangements are in place and will be used to inform future proposals and test scalability.

For the trials, it is estimated that there is £30m available in the Learner Responsive model, which is equivalent to approximately 60k learners and 100 plus providers. It is also anticipated that, over and above this £30m, some provision will be delivered through the Employer Responsive model. However, because historically this model has not included unit level funding, it is not anticipated that trial volumes will be significantly increased above that delivered through the Learner Responsive model.

The recently announced flexibilities for SMEs within Train to Gain has accelerated and expanded the scope of the trials, although the SME work will be separate from the unit trials. The unit funding trials are focussing on units to stimulate engagement and progression to a whole qualification; the SME work is focussed on offering employers packages of units from the QCF focussing on ten key sector areas. Both approaches will test a unit funding approach.

Data for the unit trials will be collected using unit codes. Bureaucracy will be minimised by the restricted nature of the trial (not all QCF units) and by not changing the fundamental approach to recording learning aims in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) – that is, the provider only needs to record the highest level of aggregation for the learner's programme (if they are enrolled on a qualification, they only record the qualification and not the constituent units). This is as per the Request for Change regarding the Recording of eligible units of qualifications in the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) on the Learning Aim Database (LAD) previously submitted.

3.2 Credit Success Rates

To recognise success at unit level we are currently developing a method of calculating a credit success rate. This will be developed in the context of Framework for Excellence to

frame how a new measure would be used in performance management. The CSR will be trialled alongside the unit funding trials.

The 'Harmonisation of Success rates' group chaired by Lesley Davies will assess proposed changes to success rates and then make a recommendation to *the information authority* board for final approval.

3.3 Interim Service Layer

LSC will be assuming responsibility for delivering the interim arrangements for the QCF Service Layer from March 2009. These arrangements will deliver service continuity to those Awarding Organisations, Providers and Learners who have been part of the Tests and Trials.

3.4 Full Service Layer

LSC are commencing the design of the full service layer functionality which will commence operation in autumn 2010. The first phase will focus on requirements gathering.

4. FE Sector Implications

4.1 Service Layer

Providers, where approved by the learner, will have delegated access to a 'vouched for' record of learners' prior achievement to assist in the collection of prior achievement and in verifying partial achievement towards a qualification.

4.2 Bureaucracy

Consultation with providers highlighted potential increases in bureaucracy. This was particularly in relation to increases in volumes of transactions between providers and Awarding Organisations to register and accredit at unit level. The Bureaucracy Reduction Group (BRG) have previously reviewed QCF and LSC has recently engaged with BRG and carried out 'hot spot mapping' of where potential increases in bureaucracy may occur to inform future impact assessment by BRG. LSC will submit a further self assessment of the QCF to BRG at the end of November (please see appendix 4 for further details).

4.3 Rules of Combination (RoC)

The systems model for delivering QCF includes a RoC Engine which includes a calculator element. The proposals are that this is a distributable feature of the Service Layer that providers and Awarding Organisations could download and run against their own data in much the same way that LIS works now.

4.4 Data Standardisation

There are potential benefits that can be derived across the sector through standardisation of the data that Awarding Organisations request from providers when they register learners and submit claims for certification.

For the purposes of the Service Layer common standards for data for all awarding organisations will be agreed and that these will form part of an SLA. The standardisation of the data is only for the purpose of ensuring the Service Layer can function. This process may have a beneficial knock on impact to the interaction between Awarding

Organisations and providers (requiring standard data like ULN, Qualification and Unit references), but it is not the purpose of the standards we need to set.

4.5 National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ) and the Learner Aims Database (LAD)

There are opportunities to standardise and have greater alignment between the data held on LAD and NDAQ in terms of unit and qualification codes, and work will be planned to address this as part of the wider QCF implementation. This has the potential to shorten the time from accreditation through to funding approval for a qualification and reduce the burden on providers trying to check if an activity is funded, as it would no longer be necessary to check using different databases (i.e. one from NDAQ and one from LAD). LSC may require support from *the information authority* in achieving this but at this juncture the precise requirement is unclear.

4.6 Availability of achievement data

There are opportunities, where Awarding Organisations opt to use the learner record provided through the QCF Service Layer, to provide earlier access to achievement data. It is anticipated that, when the fully managed QCF Service Layer is operational, a data feed would be provided to the FE Data Service for the operational running of management information reports for the sector in England, with similar being provided for Wales and Northern Ireland as required. The specification and development of such reports will be part of the development of the fully managed QCF Service Layer. Whilst it is not clear at this stage, it could be anticipated that LSC will require the support of *the information authority* at the juncture when such reports are being defined.

5. Next Steps

We would request that *the information authority* requests of the LSC any support required in helping to standardise data flows between Awarding Organisations and providers to help alleviate bureaucracy for the QCF and more widely.

We would request that the Software Suppliers and Data Advisory Groups of *the information authority* consider the proposals around unit funding and credit success rates and advise of the data implications in relation to the benefits.

6. Contact Details

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Appendix 1

1.1. Glossary

1.1.1 Unit Funding

The concept of LSC's funding being directed at unit level attainment is in addition to full qualification. Trials of unit level funding have started for 2008/09 with a view to fully funding at unit level in 2010/11.

1.1.2 Interim Service Layer

This is a descriptor of the service that will be provided until September 2010 when the final solution, delivered by a fully managed service provider, will go live. This encompasses the initial transition of responsibility from QCA to LSC, maintaining continuity of service and incremental development of the service in the direction of the final solution and in support of the aims of QCF. It is not anticipated that all functionality of the QCF service will be provided through the interim service.

1.1.3 Full Service Layer

This is a descriptor of the final solution that will be delivered by a fully managed service provider and will go live in September 2010. This will include all functionality to support the services provided through the Service Layer.

1.1.4 Rules of Combination

The set of business rules that govern how units may be combined or accumulated to achieve qualifications.

Appendix 2

2.1 Service Continuity Plan

The LSC is committed to ensuring a continuity of service to key user groups of the service layer of QCF during the transition from QCA and LSC. In consultation with Awarding Organisations, providers and other key stakeholders the LSC will define the arrangements for the continuity plan. This document sets out our approach for developing and implementing our service continuity measures.

Assumptions

This plan covers the establishment of a transition service that will be available until such a time as migration to the final state service occurs.

That starting point for service review will include the improvements specified by QCA to ensure the continued operation of the service between now and March

Month One (Oct-Nov)

1. Upon receiving the approval of the final business case from DIUS the LSC will engage directly with the awarding organisations and a selection of existing centres to establish the must have requirements for service continuity and a generally agreed position for transition of services, including scope and scale.
2. The LSC shall in co-operation with OfQual develop the core principles of the service level agreements (SLA). This is dependent on OfQual supporting the SLA approach. These principles will then be shared for discussion with the awarding organisations.
3. The LSC shall with the cooperation of QCA engage with its service providers BSG and Parity to understand the current contractual position, service levels, and performance.
4. The LSC will recruit a service manager who will act as the senior responsible officer for all operational service issues

Month Two (Nov-Dec)

5. Service continuity plan issued.

Month Three (Dec-Jan)

6. The specification of the interim service layer service levels has been completed and a decision to either maintain the current service, improve the current service or replace the current service is taken. The current service would only be replaced should it prove impossible to move forward in any other way.

7. Should system improvements be required a new contract will be drawn up with Parity and BSG. Parity will be commissioned to improve the service and be given responsibility for managing BSG for the remainder of the project. The new contracts will reflect the service levels required within the service level agreements.
8. Should no system improvements be required the current system will be brought within the LSC eco system and the intellectual property associated with the interim will be transferred to the LSC and managed according to the service levels required by the service level agreements.
9. The LSC will recruit a service support desk to provide front line support to all users.

Month Four (Jan-Feb)

10. New service contracts with the service providers signed.

Month Five (Feb-Mar)

11. The draft service level agreements are circulated for discussion.

Month Six (Mar-Apr)

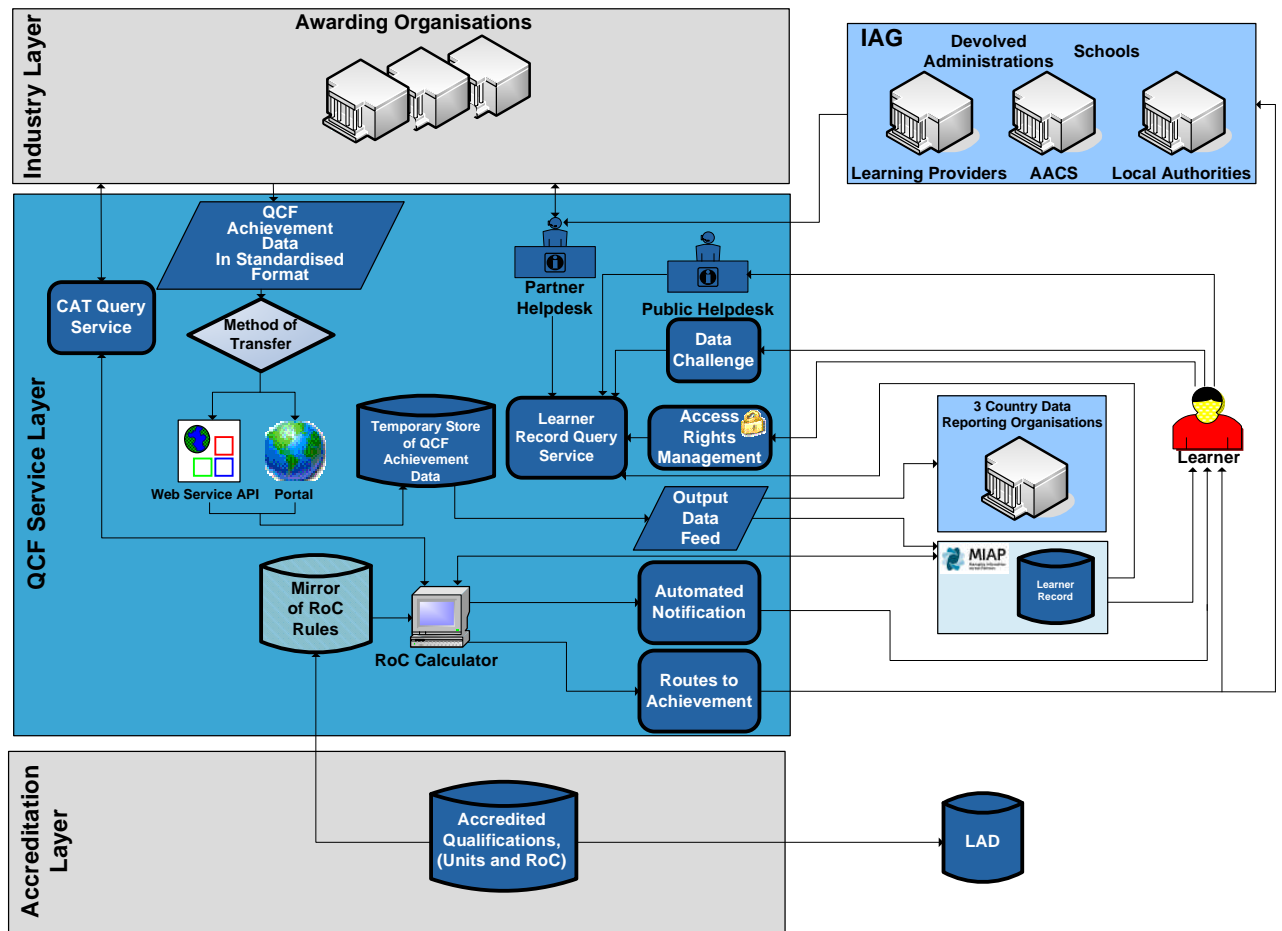
12. The service level agreements are signed and the service is no longer managed on a contractual basis with awarding organisations.

The interim service now begins to be managed wholly by the LSC according to the service levels agreed.

Appendix 3

3.1 Full Service Layer Model

The model has three distinct layers: an Accreditation Layer, for which Ofqual is responsible (on behalf of the Regulators for Wales and Northern Ireland) that oversees the accreditation of organisations and qualifications into the QCF; an Industry Layer in which Awarding Organisations operate; and a Service Layer which provides systems and services for Awarding Organisations and Learners and will offer the functionality for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) to take place. It is the Service Layer which is proposed to operate differently to the test and trials placing the Learner Record at the centre of the operation.



Appendix 4 – BRG Paper

Background and introduction

1. On 14 November the Further Education Minister, Sion Simon, announced that the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) will be implemented by 2010. This announcement follows the submission of a Final Business Case on the QCF to Ministers on 29 September 2008, alongside a Feasibility and Impact report on the higher level delivery model (service layer) for the QCF which was produced by LSC. Key partners across the wider UK programme of vocational qualification reform have received remits with regard to QCF implementation; in particular responsibility for the implementation of the QCF now transfers to LSC. LSC is now responsible for both the implementation of the QCF across the wider employment and skills sector, ensuring that planning, funding and performance are fully aligned with a unit based qualification and credit framework, and for the development and implementation of the high level delivery model for the QCF – the service layer.
2. The high level delivery model is the vehicle through which credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) will operate. The delivery model is also where the focus of concern concerning the complexity and cost of system development necessary to support fully functioning CAT is centred. During the two year period of tests and trials of the QCF QCA operated a prototype delivery model which focussed on a Learner Achievement Record utilising the MIAP Learner Record. LSC must now plan a phased transition to a final delivery model offer the full functionality of a qualification and credit system and consider a schedule of service development and systems enhancement to start immediately. LSC will need to work closely with QCA to agree a smooth transition from the initial prototype, to an interim service (in the early months of the QCF being implemented) to assuming full responsibility for the service layer from April 2009. LSC will need to provide continuity of service through transition until the final solution is operational and the full functionality of the QCF delivered by 2010.
3. Alongside the wider QCF policy development and alignment there is a need to specify and implement the transitional delivery service and specify and procure the full managed delivery service. Some initial work has been done but the major work streams will now begin immediately. The Bureaucracy Review Group has received previous submissions and assessment with regard to the general development of the QCF and the progress of the QCF in a test and trial context. The Group have raised a

number of concerns about the potential of the QCF to add unnecessary additional bureaucracy (as well as endorsing the positive benefits of moving towards a more flexible and inclusive unit based qualification and credit framework). As implementation of the QCF takes place, there is now a need for the Group to focus on and scrutinise specific aspects of the QCF and from a practical context. Whilst concerns may remain around some of the wider challenges of implementation – provider capability and capacity, managing a mixed economy of National Qualification Framework (NQF) and QCF provision, a wider range of awarding organisations – it is the systems implications that appear now to most concern those who will be engaged in actually delivering the QCF. In this respect this paper represents a review of the first of a range of ‘hot spots’ around QCF implementation which the Group will need to focus on (the others being around the expanded Awarding Organisation landscape, Information Advice and Guidance and employer engagement).

Purpose

4. This paper is provided for discussion. It sets out the major processes for Providers and Awarding Organisations (AOs) around Learner enrolment and certification in the context of the QCF in order to highlight areas where there is perceived to be an influence, both positive and negative, on the level of bureaucracy.
5. The main stakeholders likely to influence bureaucracy are:
 - a. Ofqual, through the regulations;
 - b. LSC, through the requirements placed on users of the Service Layer and funding policy changes; and
 - c. AOs, through operational policies/requirements placed on Providers. For example, their registration policy, billing policy and approach to sharing units will all influence the levels of bureaucracy experienced by Providers.
6. A number of common business processes within the QCF are presented and there is a commentary against each process map indicating where the level of bureaucracy may be influenced. Prior to this paper being submitted to the Group, initial comments and responses have been sought from AOs and Providers.

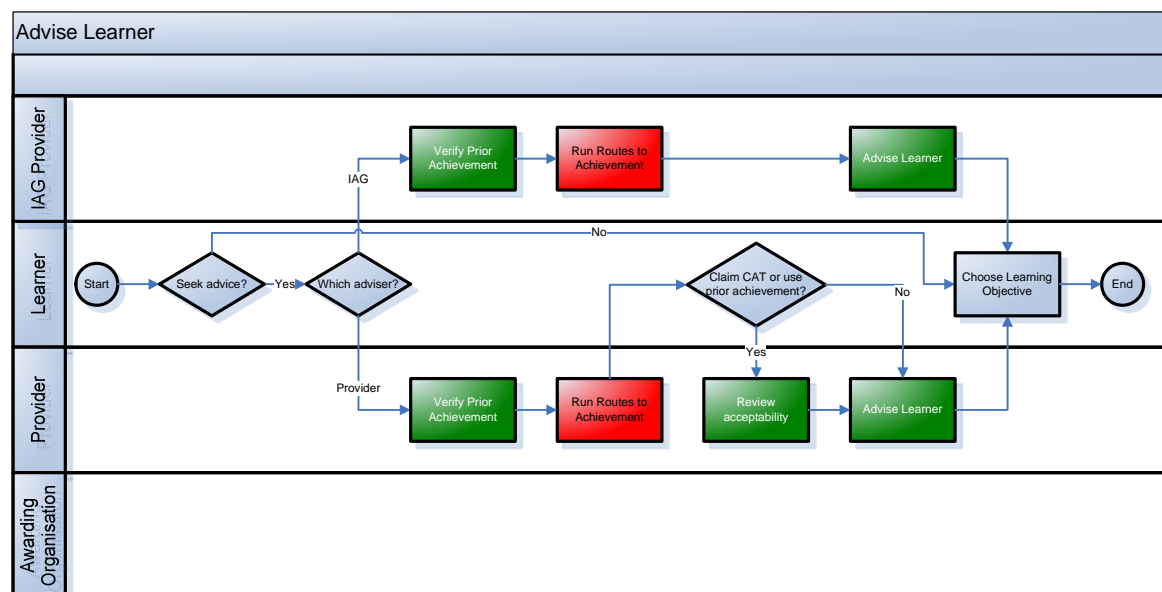
Key points/issues

7. Six processes have been mapped and included in this analysis:
 - a) Advise Learner
 - b) Enrol Learner
 - c) Verify Unit achievement
 - d) Claim Qualification achievement
 - e) Verify CAT
 - f) Verify prior attainment
8. Most of these processes existed in some form prior to QCF; only Verify CAT is entirely new.
9. Process steps that are new are highlighted in red. It is not necessarily the case that a new step means increased bureaucracy, since the use of technology may enable the step to be completed efficiently. In the case of 'Verify CAT' the entire process is new and is highlighted accordingly.
10. Process steps that currently exist but will change as a result of the QCF are highlighted in green.
11. A key issue for each process step that is influenced is the proximity of the change. Many steps will see a gradual increase as the volume of Learners in the QCF increases. The nature and timetable of QCF implementation in a publicly funded context will be dependent upon how and at what pace LSC aligns key processes of planning, funding and performance with the QCF and where, in terms of delivery, LSC focuses the move to QCF units and qualifications first.
12. The move to unit-based learning and the ability to accumulate and transfer the unit credit is likely to have the most significant impact on bureaucracy. This is likely to be mitigated by the development of the service layer to assist the verification of credit transfer and a reduction in the level of prior attainment that is claimed. Ultimately AO policy is the most influential factor.
13. It is recommended that the highlighted process steps are the focus in any ongoing review.

Advise Learner

14. This process sets out the way in which Learners access advice about learning objectives. It is necessarily simplified because Learners may seek advice more than once and with both Providers and IAG Providers. The key aspect of the process map is to highlight the additional responsibility that a Provider has around CAT or prior attainment.

15. The process map is shown below:



16. Bureaucracy influences:

- Verify Prior Achievement: an existing activity that is likely to become more involved because of the need to investigate units held as well as qualifications. Awarding organisation policy and requirements will have a significant bearing on this activity.
- Run Routes to Achievement: whilst the ability to use the system to determine what the Learner can do with the units and qualifications they have achieved is a new step, it has the potential to simplify the process of providing advice and guidance.
- Review acceptability: it will be the responsibility of the Provider to establish a reasonable degree of certainty that the CAT or prior attainment claim that will be made by the Learner when he/she claims a qualification will be successful (Providers already do this under current rules for prior attainment.) Ultimate responsibility for award remains with the AO however.
- Advise Learner: it is likely that the existing advice and guidance process will become more involved as CAT opens up more opportunities for Learners.

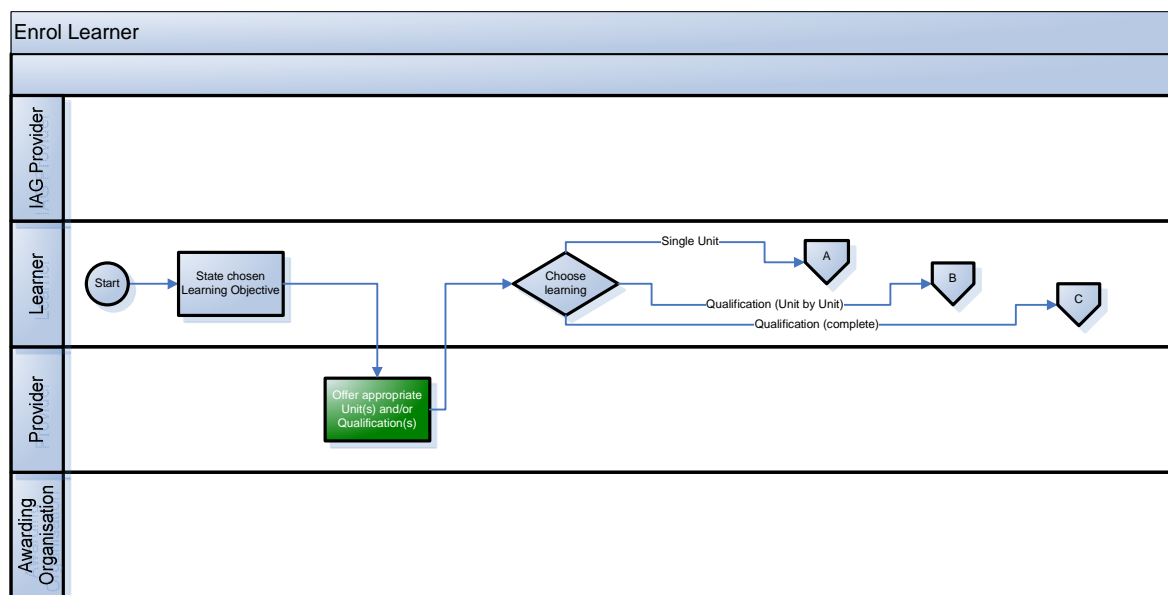
Enrol Learner

17. This process varies depending on the learning for which the Learner is enrolling.

Three options are considered:

- a) A single unit;
- b) A qualification where the Learner is required to enrol unit by unit; or
- c) A complete qualification (i.e. the Learner is enrolled on all constituent units automatically).

18. The process map is shown below:



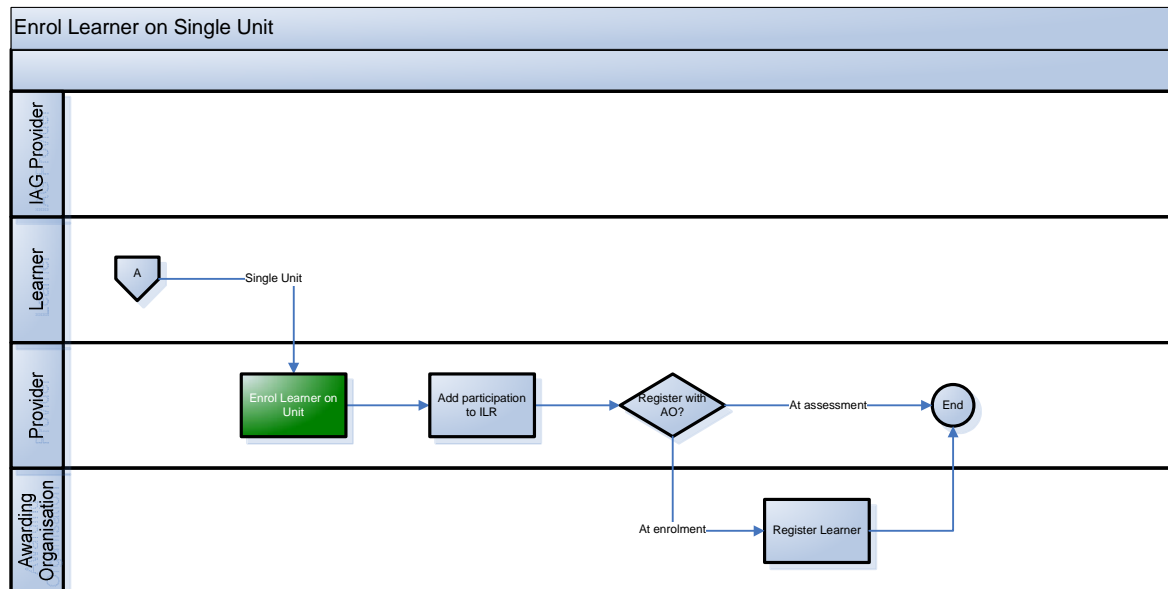
19. Bureaucracy influences:

- a) Offer appropriate unit(s) and/or qualification(s): in the short term this activity will be influenced by AO registration policy in respect of the QCF. In the longer term this will also be influenced by LSC policy e.g. moves towards unit-based funding and/or demand-led funding.

Enrol Learner on Single Unit

20. This is a continuation of the *Enrol Learner* process and shows the route taken by a Learner who is enrolling on a single unit.

21. The process map is shown below:



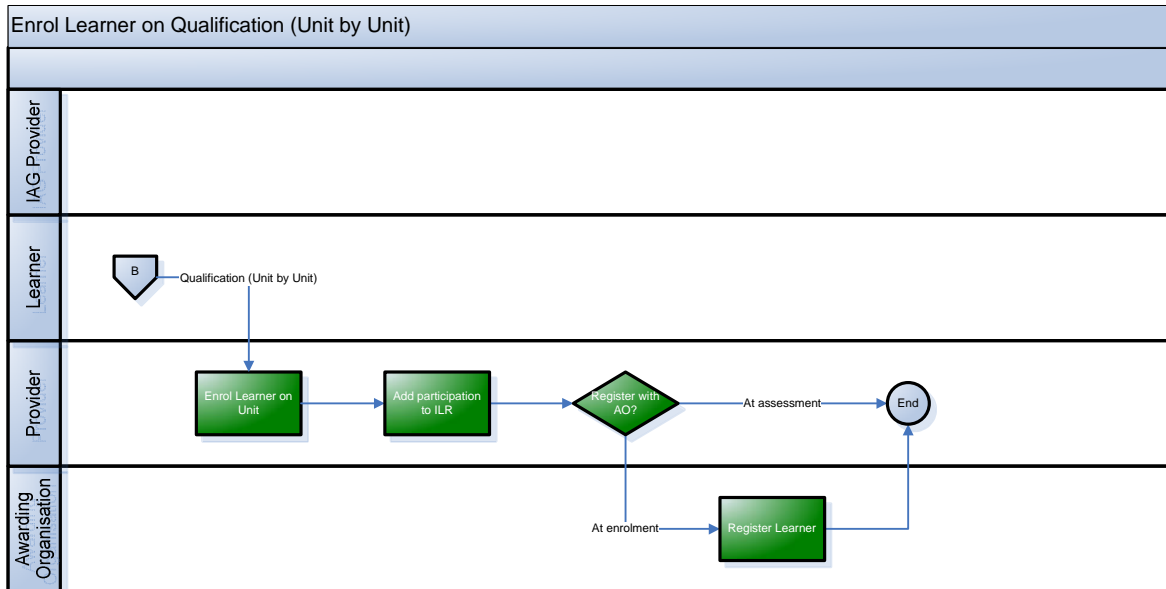
22. Bureaucracy influences:

- a) Learners are already able to enrol on single units; however the move to unit-based learning is likely to increase the number of units that are available to Learners. However this will be driven by AO policy and employer/learner demand. Funding policy in respect of funding units will also have an impact in time.

Enrol Learner on Qualification (Unit by Unit)

23. This continuation of the *Enrol Learner* process shows the route taken by a Learner who is enrolling on a complete qualification, but where they are required to enrol for each unit (or group of units) individually i.e. there are multiple enrolments for the Learner.

24. The process map is shown below:



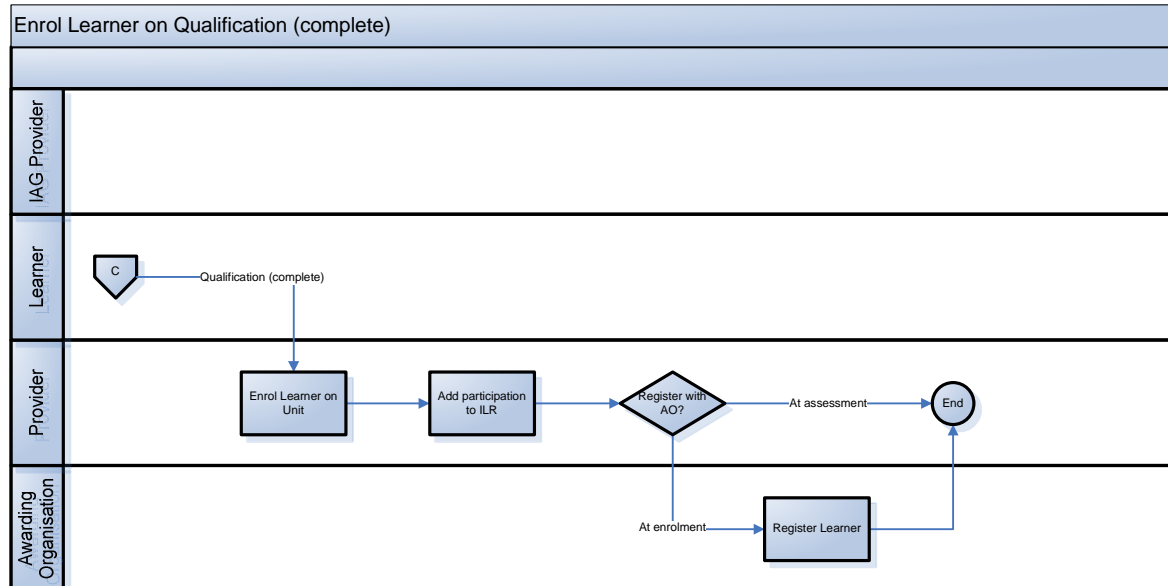
25. Bureaucracy influences:

- a) AO policy may require Providers to enrol Learners on individual units or groups of Units rather than an entire qualification. Such a policy would have a significant influence on the levels of bureaucracy experienced by a Provider as each step in the process would have to be completed several times.

Enrol Learner on Qualification (Complete)

26. This continuation of the *Enrol Learner* process shows the route taken by a Learner who is enrolling on a complete qualification.

27. The process map is shown below:



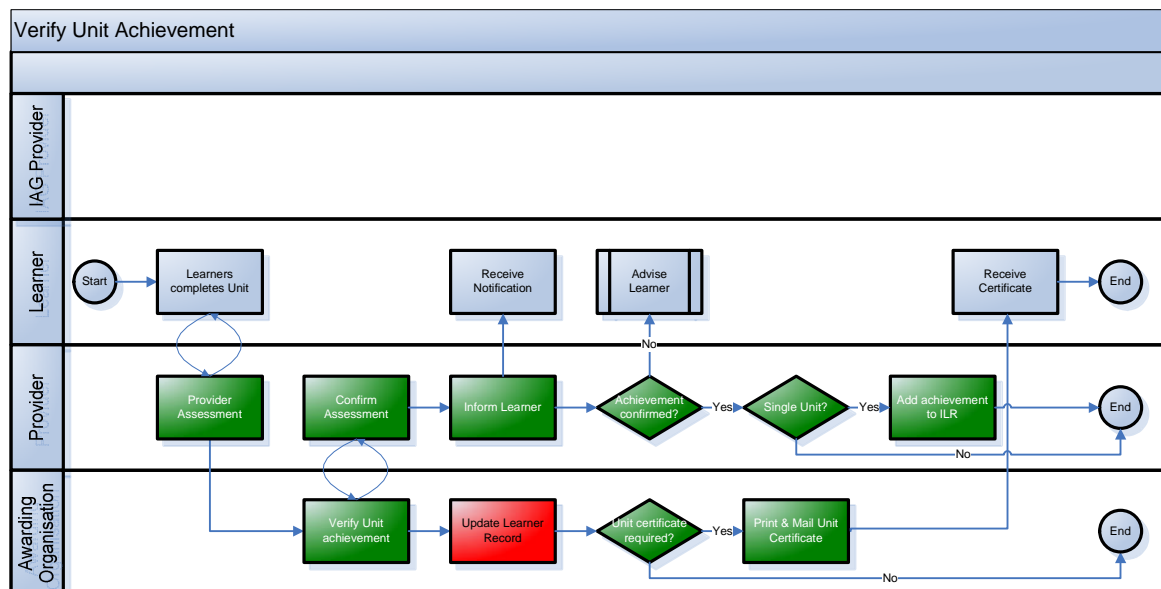
28. Bureaucracy influences:

- a) This process route assumes that when a Learner is enrolled on a Qualification he/she is automatically enrolled on all constituent units, however it remains to be seen how this operates with rules of combination, multiple paths to the qualification and so on. We see no increase in bureaucracy when enrolling Learners on a complete qualification at this time, assuming that the current processes are retained.

Verify Unit achievement

29. This process sets out the steps required for an AO to satisfy itself that a Learner has achieved a unit. For simplicity it is assumed that the assessment is carried out by the Provider rather than some external body.

30. The process map is shown below:



31. Whilst there is an existing process to verify unit achievement the move to a unit-based framework means that this process is likely to operate much more frequently, increasing the burden on all stakeholders involved.

32. Bureaucracy influences:

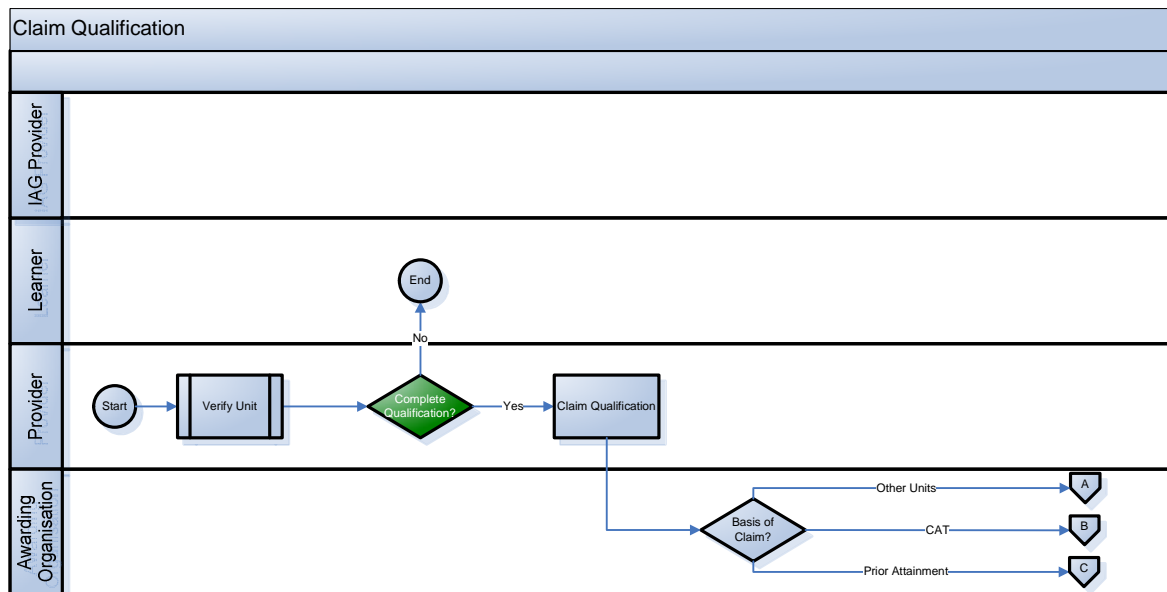
- Provider Assessment: an existing activity, however the move to the QCF is likely to increase the number of units for which a Learner can be assessed separately, thereby increasing the burden on Providers. This however depends on the extent to which AOs create such units and assessment approaches.
- Verify unit achievement: similarly, additional unit-level assessments will create additional bureaucracy for AOs in verifying Learner achievement.
- Confirm Assessment: it is likely that greater assessment will mean greater interaction between Providers and AOs in verifying that the Provider assessment was completed to the expected standards; however this is subject to AO policy.
- Update Learner Record: under the QCF AOs will be required to update the Learner Record when units are achieved, not just qualifications, thereby increasing bureaucracy.
- Print & Mail Unit Certificate: there is already some unit certification; however the move to the QCF is likely to increase the number of individually certified units.
- Add achievement to ILR: again, the move to the QCF is likely to increase the number of units for which a Learner can be assessed separately, thereby increasing the burden on Providers.

Claim Qualification achievement

33. Providers will claim qualifications on behalf of Learners in much the same way as before, however the QCF introduces a new trigger for the process:

- a) Other Units: the claim is based on the fact that the Learner has accumulated all of the required units from the same AO. This is the simplest claim.
- b) Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT): the claim includes QCF units and/or Qualifications from other AOs.
- c) Prior attainment: the claim includes some element of prior attainment, either with the AO or another AO that is not in QCF. This route will be common in the early years of QCF but is expected to diminish over time.

34. The process map is shown below:



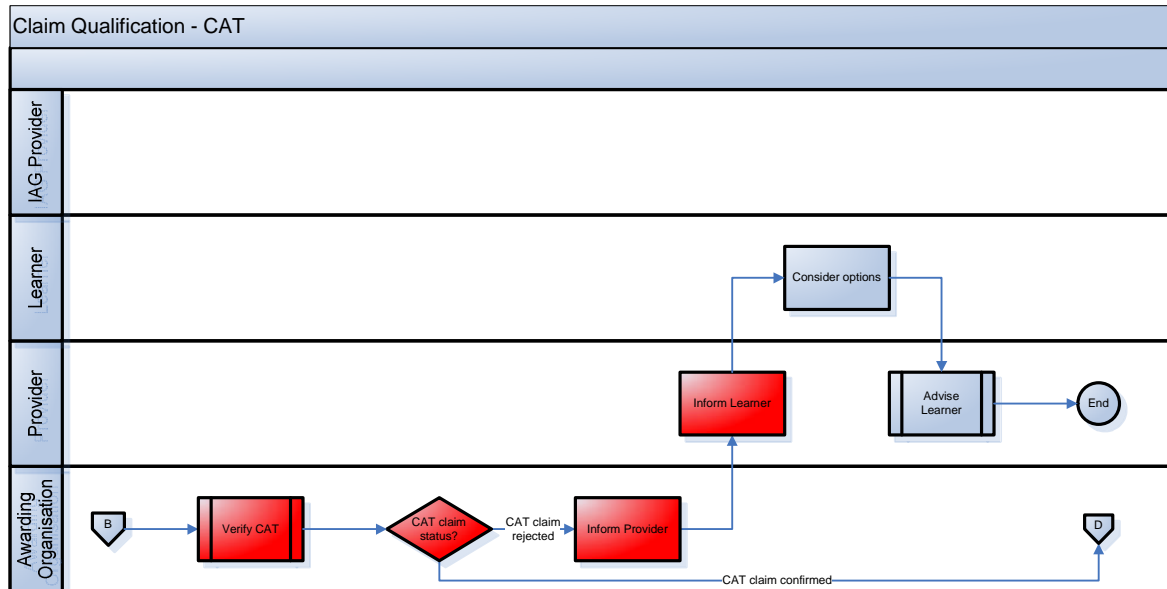
35. Bureaucracy influences:

- a) Providers are accustomed to tracking Learners' progress and determining whether a Learner has reached the point at which a qualification may be claimed, however under the QCF it is likely that this will happen more frequently.

Claim Qualification – CAT

36. This continuation of the *Claim Qualification* process shows the steps where the Learner is claiming CAT i.e. is looking to use credit already achieved under QCF to contribute to the qualification claimed.

37. The process map is shown below:



38. Bureaucracy influences:

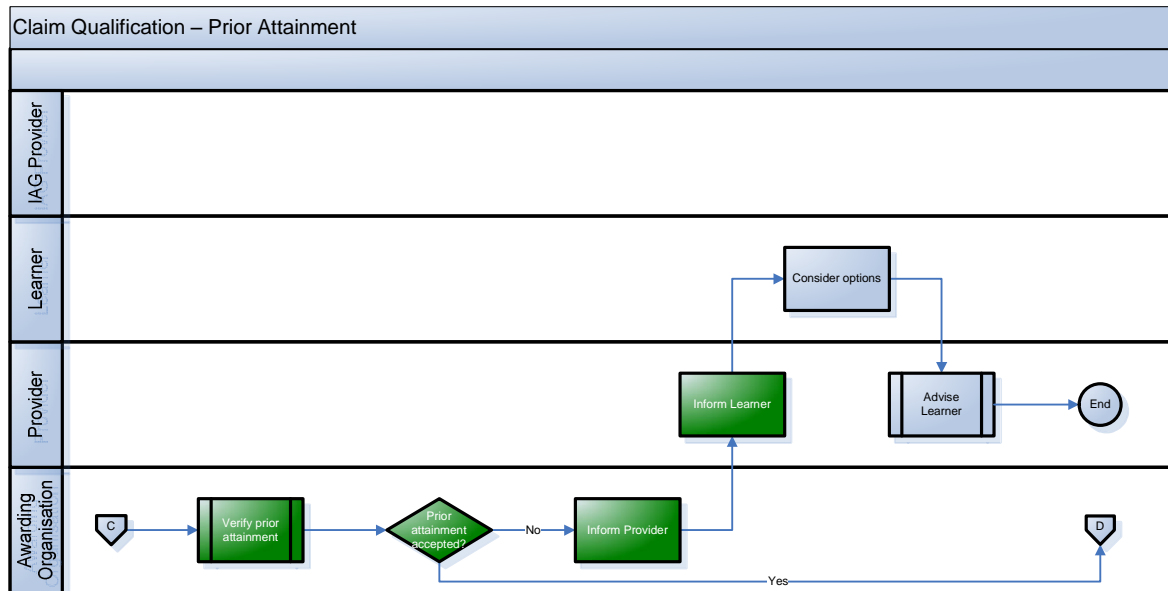
- a) Verify CAT: is an entirely new step (see below for a full definition of this sub-process) that could increase the level of bureaucracy at AOs; however this is largely dependent on AO policy around shared units. It will also depend on the processes and functions that LSC puts into the Service Layer. There is likely to be a corresponding reduction in claims relating to prior attainment (from outside the QCF) that will mitigate the influence of this additional process. Ultimately, it will be driven by the number of Learners that opt to do CAT.
- b) Inform Provider/Inform Learner: there is the potential for increase bureaucracy caused by rejected CAT claims; however this is mitigated by the responsibility that will be placed on Providers to review the likely acceptability of the claim at the point of enrolment.

NB. The outcome of a rejected claim is likely to be enrolment on further units or perhaps a further assessment, however for clarity the process only shows the Learner going back to the *Advise Learner* process to choose a new learning objective, and hence the process will begin again.

Claim Qualification – Prior Attainment

39. This continuation of the *Claim Qualification* process shows the steps where the Learner is claiming prior attainment i.e. is looking to use achievements that were made outside the QCF to contribute to the qualification claimed.

40. The process map is shown below:



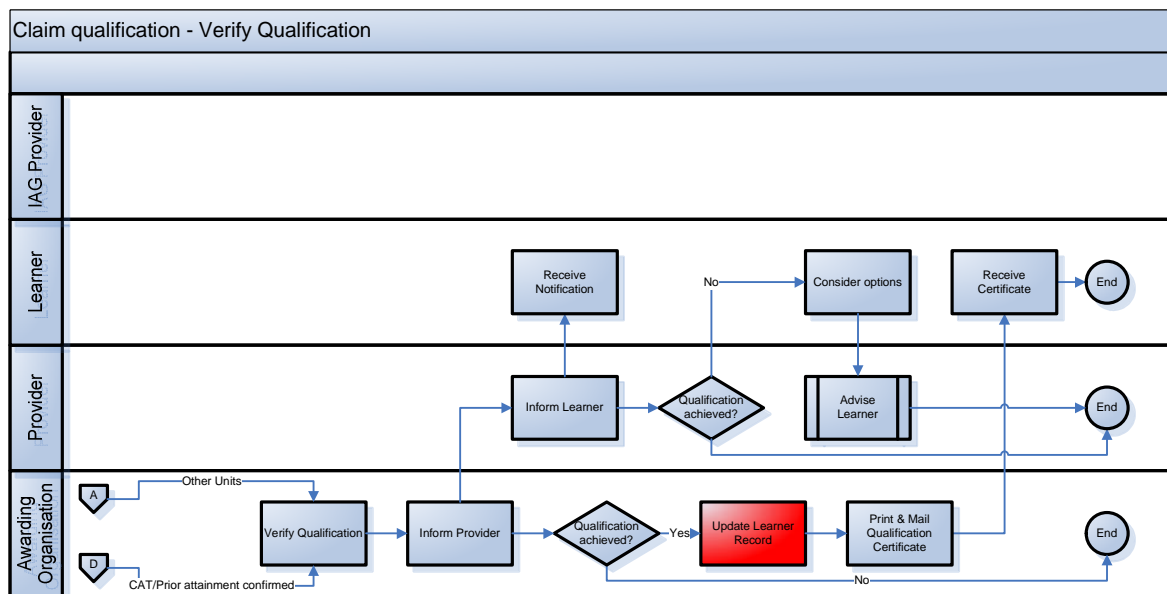
41. Bureaucracy influences:

- Verify prior attainment: it is anticipated that as the QCF is taken up that the levels of prior attainment claimed from outside QCF will fall. A full definition of this sub-process is presented below.
- Inform Provider/Inform Learner: similarly as the number of claims falls, so will the corresponding effort in informing Learners of the outcome.
NB. The outcome of a rejected claim is likely to be enrolment in further Units or perhaps a further assessment, however for clarity the process only shows the Learner going back to the *Advise Learner* process to choose a new learning objective, and hence the process will begin again.

Claim Qualification – Verify Qualification

42. This continuation of the *Claim Qualification* process shows the final stage in verifying a Qualification. Having reached this point the AO is satisfied that the Learner’s claim for prior attainment or CAT is acceptable; alternatively the Learner’s claim could be based on units achieved with the AO. In any event, the AO must now verify the achievement prior to award. If the Learner is successful the achievement is added to the Learner Record. Of course it is possible that the Learner does not achieve the Qualification (even if any claimed CAT or prior attainment is acceptable) and there are several possible routes that a Learner could take in this situation. For the sake of clarity the process only shows the Learner going back to the *Advise Learner* process to choose a new learning objective, and hence the process will begin again. Lastly it is possible that the Learner could continue with learning after achieving the qualification but again this option is omitted.

43. The process map is shown below:



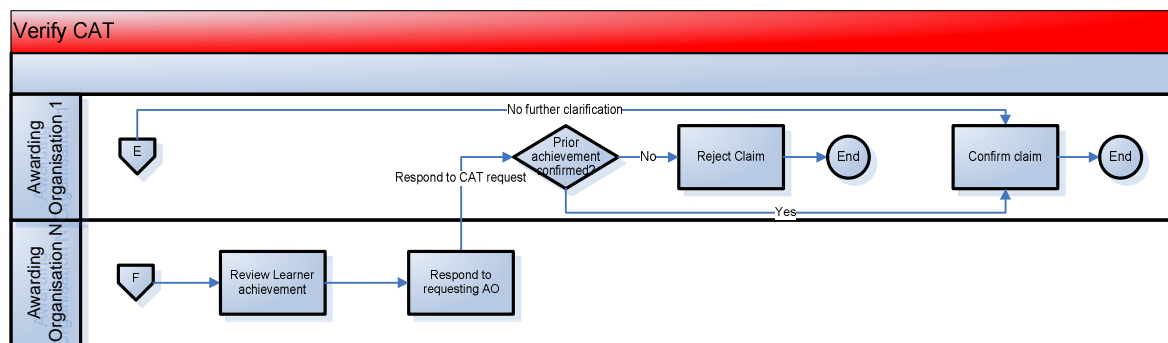
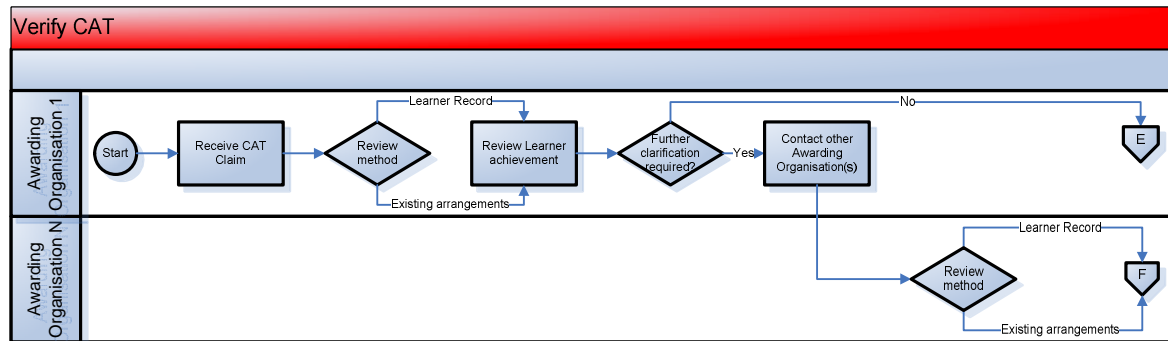
44. Bureaucracy influences:

- a) Update Learner Record: this is a new process step for AOs which therefore increases bureaucracy; however this can be mitigated to a certain extent by LSC policy around timing and frequency of updates.

Verify CAT

45. *Verify CAT* is a sub-process of the *Claim Qualification* process. As such the end point of this process means a return to *Claim Qualification*, which shows the subsequent steps that will take place depending on whether the claim is accepted or rejected.

46. The process map is shown below:



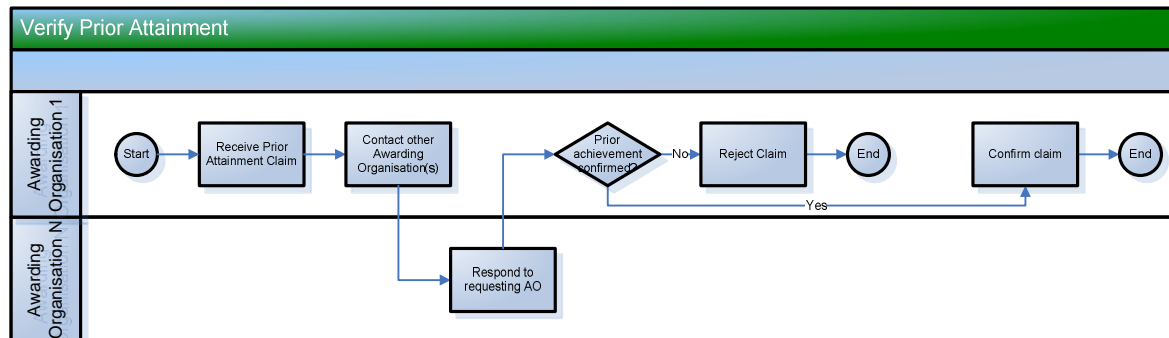
47. Bureaucracy influences:

- This sub-process is entirely new and it is the result of the move to a credit and unit-based framework. The extent to which bureaucracy is influenced is directly related to the volume of CAT claims in the system. To date very few CAT claims have been made however this is expected to increase over time.
- If the Learner is claiming CAT, then it is incumbent on the AO to verify that the prior achievement claimed has indeed been achieved, which may involve consulting the Learner's Learner Record and/or using existing arrangements such as the AOs internal systems. Each AO will set internal policy that will determine its approach here.
- In some cases there will be a need to consult the AO that awarded the units claimed. The influence of this requirement is largely driven by AO policy towards CAT and it is probable that the need to consult will reduce over time as AOs gain greater confidence in the QCF, however there may be a significant overhead in the early days.

Verify prior attainment

48. *Verify Prior Attainment* is a sub-process of the *Claim Qualification* process. As such the end point of this process means a return to *Claim Qualification*, which shows the subsequent steps that will take place depending on whether the claim is accepted or rejected.

49. The process map is shown below:



50. Bureaucracy influences:

- This is an existing process, which is likely to be commonplace in the early years of QCF but is expected to occur less frequently over time as CAT claims occur more often. The extent to which this happens is dependent on the rate of take up of QCF qualifications.

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