

3.3 Awards, programmes and curricula

- **An Apprenticeship Awarding Body** is a legal entity which has the power to make **apprenticeship awards** that are recognised within the NFQ or another kind of awarding body with a joint awarding arrangement to make apprenticeship awards with such an entity. The awarding body may or may not be a provider.
- **An Award** means an award, including a joint award, for education or training, or both, made by an awarding body or in the case of a joint award, by two or more awarding bodies, to a learner to record or certify that the learner has acquired a particular standard of knowledge, skill or competence; it includes (a) a certificate, (b) a diploma, (c) a degree. The **apprenticeship award** made, following successful completion of an apprenticeship programme, is expected to be placed on the NFQ and to be consistent with (i) the occupational profile, (ii) the applicable NFQ professional award-type descriptor in conjunction with (iii) any other applicable award-type descriptor (e.g. a descriptor for an honours bachelor degree).

- **A Programme of Education and Training** is a process by which a learner acquires knowledge, skill or competence and that includes a course of study, a course of instruction and an apprenticeship.
- **A Validated Programme:** A programme of education and training is validated where QQI confirms, under section 45 of the 2012 Act, that the provider of the programme has satisfied it that an enrolled learner of that provider who completes that programme will acquire, and where appropriate, be able to demonstrate, the necessary knowledge, skill or competence to justify an award being offered in respect of that programme. Other awarding bodies have similar procedures for the approval of programmes and so the term ‘validated programme’ is also used in these contexts.
- **A Provider’s Validated Programme:** validation as defined above applies to a provider’s programme rather than to a programme in isolation from a provider. A validated programme is not transferrable from one provider to another. However, a programme may be validated for provision by an expandable group of providers meeting criteria approved at the point of validation and accountable to the Coordinating Provider.
- **A Validated Apprenticeship Programme** means a validated programme based on a curriculum developed and maintained by a **Coordinating Provider**. There would be only one apprenticeship programme per apprenticeship occupation and only one validation process conducted either by the Coordinating Provider (possibly jointly with other awarding bodies) or by QQI (possibly jointly) on application from the Coordinating Provider or a Designated Awarding Body (possibly jointly) where the Coordinating Provider is a Linked Provider.