



Audit Report

Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH)

30 March 2023

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1 Background

This was the fourth audit of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation in November 2011. CIH is an independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards. It is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation. CIH's headquarters are in Coventry.

1.1 Scope

SQA Accreditation carries out quality assurance activity in line with its *Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy*. This states the type and frequency of our quality assurance activities, describes our reporting procedures and indicates how the awarding body's Quality Enhancement Rating is calculated.

As this was a full, remote audit of CIH and all regulatory requirements were included within the scope of the audit. Our quality assurance activities are conducted on a sampling basis and, consequently, not all aspects of the awarding body's systems, procedures and performance have been considered in this report to the same depth.

SQA Accreditation audit reports are written by exception focusing only on those areas where corrective action is required or recommended. Consequently, this approach to audit reporting does not detail areas where compliance or good practice was found.

The audit was designed to ensure CIH complies with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements namely:

- ◆ *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2021)*
- ◆ all *Regulatory Principle Directives*
- ◆ the awarding body's Accreditation Licence

Awarding body documentation considered for review by the Audit Team includes all documents banked on CIH's SharePoint site at the time of audit and information supplied to support audit activity. Restricted or commercially sensitive information gathered during SQA Accreditation's quality assurance activities is treated in the strictest confidence.

1.2 Audit Report and Action Plan Timescales

CIH 30 March 2023

Audit Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 31 May 2023

Audit Report to be signed by CIH: 12 July 2023

Action Plan to be emailed
to regulation@sqa.org.uk by CIH: 12 July 2023

The process will apply in relation to the timescales specified above:

- ◆ The awarding body will be sent a signed copy of the Audit Report by email.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign the copy of the Audit Report and return by email to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified above.
- ◆ The awarding body will also be emailed a copy of the Action Plan.
- ◆ The awarding body must complete and return the Action Plan in accordance with the timescale specified above and email this in Microsoft Word format to regulation@sqa.org.uk.
- ◆ SQA Accreditation will confirm when the Action Plan is appropriate to address the Issues and present it to Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG) for approval.
- ◆ Following approval by ACG, the awarding body will be sent a signed copy of the approved Action Plan by email.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign the copy of the Action Plan and return by email to SQA Accreditation.

The findings of this Audit Report and the associated Action Plan will be published on SQA Accreditation's website following signed agreement.

SQA Accreditation will continually monitor progress towards completion of the proposed actions identified in the Action Plan and update the awarding body's Quality Enhancement Rating as appropriate.

1.3 Summary of Audit Issues and Recommendations

An Issue has been recorded where evidence shows that the awarding body is not compliant with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements. The awarding body must address the Issues and specify corrective and preventative measures to address them through its Action Plan.

The Action Plan is emailed to CIH as a separate document to the Audit Report, and must be submitted to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified in 1.2.

As a result of the audit and post-audit activities, three Issues have been recorded and three Recommendations have been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 3, 9	Some documents were identified as being out of date and inaccurate.	Low
2. Principle 10, 11	Qualification accreditation dates were found to be incomplete in the sample evidence to the Accreditation Auditors.	Low
3. Principle 16	An incorrect link was identified in the escalation process in the awarding body's complaints policy.	Low

A Recommendation has been noted where SQA Accreditation considers there is potential for enhancement. The awarding body is advised to address any Recommendations in order to reinforce ongoing continuous improvement. However, measures to correct or prevent these are not mandatory and therefore do not form part of the Action Plan.

Recommendation	Detail of Recommendation noted
1. Principle 2, 11	It is recommended that CIH continue to provide accurate information regarding SQA Accreditation and accredited qualifications to providers, highlighting their relevance, to try and increase accredited provision in Scotland.
2. Principle 16,18	The awarding body's complaints and malpractice log didn't have the option to filter entries recorded for SQA accredited qualifications.
3. Principle 17	It may be useful to learners if complaints information was detailed, or their complaints policy signposted to, within their appeals policy.

1.4 Risk Rating of Issues

SQA Accreditation assigns a rating to each Issue recorded, depending on the impact on or risk to the awarding body's operations, its SQA accredited qualifications and/or the learner. Issues recorded during the audit will count towards CIH's Quality Enhancement Rating which will, in turn, contribute towards future quality assurance activity. Further detail on how the Quality Enhancement Rating is calculated can be found on the [SQA Accreditation website](#).

2 Detail of Audit Issues and Recommendations

The following sections detail Issues recorded and Recommendations noted against SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements.

2.1 Issues

Regulatory Principle 3. The awarding body must have the necessary resources to effectively carry out their operational functions to meet regulatory requirements.

Regulatory Principle 9. The awarding body and its providers must maintain accurate documents, records and data.

The Accreditation Auditors reviewed the awarding body's documentation uploaded on SharePoint prior to the audit and noted that some documents were out of date. Additionally, some referred to SCQF qualifications, rather than the accurate description of SQA accredited qualifications. When this was discussed at audit, the awarding body representatives confirmed that an approach to overall oversight to document management, such as a master version control register, does not exist. Therefore, there is a higher likelihood of inaccurate or out of date documents manifesting across different platforms used by the awarding body.

This has been recorded as **Issue 1**.

Regulatory Principle 10. The awarding body must ensure that its systems and processes for the identification, design, development, implementation and review of qualifications and assessments are fit for purpose.

Regulatory Principle 11. The awarding body must ensure that its qualifications portfolio is effectively managed, maintained and reviewed.

The Accreditation Auditors reviewed the qualification records management system and process utilised by the awarding body. During the demonstration on the day of the audit, it was observed that some of the qualification accreditation dates were incomplete. It is important that all dates, start, lapse and end dates for accredited qualifications — are complete to avoid any risk of missing qualification review timeframes or to prevent any certificate claims past the end date of the qualification.

This has been recorded as **Issue 2**.

Regulatory Principle 16. The awarding body and its providers must have open and transparent systems, policies and procedures to manage complaints.

The Accreditation Auditors reviewed the awarding body's complaints policy and identified an incorrect link in the escalation process. The link currently directs parties to SQA awarding body's complaints page, rather than SQA Accreditation's complaints.

This has been recorded as **Issue 3**.

2.2 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 2. The awarding body must demonstrate clearly defined business planning processes which show evidence of management commitment and decision making and ongoing review.

Regulatory Principle 11. The awarding body must ensure that its qualifications portfolio is effectively managed, maintained and reviewed.

The Accreditation Auditors discussed with the awarding body the delivery of CIH qualifications in Scotland that were not SQA accredited qualifications. The awarding body noted that providers in Scotland seemed to opt for other regulated qualifications. However, the awarding body is unsure why this is, and has committed to undertaking a review of provider preferences to understand if providers would prefer SQA accredited versions, which would be placed on the SCQF, rather than other UK regulators, which are not on the SCQF.

The Accreditation Auditors understand that it is difficult to change provider views. However, it is recommended that CIH continue to provide accurate information regarding SQA Accreditation and accredited qualifications to providers, highlighting the relevance of them, to try and increase accredited provision in Scotland.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 1**.

Regulatory Principle 16. The awarding body and its providers must have open and transparent systems, policies and procedures to manage complaints.

Regulatory Principle 18. The awarding body and its providers must ensure that it has safeguards to prevent and manage cases of malpractice and maladministration.

The Accreditation Auditors reviewed the process for recording complaints and malpractice. The process was acceptable, and the items recorded were sufficient. However, there wasn't the option to filter entries recorded for SQA accredited qualifications. The auditors appreciate that due to centre numbers and qualifications, it would be easy to spot if there were any actions against the one provider of the single accredited qualification. However, with the intention to grow the number of qualifications and hopefully too, providers, it would be useful to be able to filter these recording mechanisms.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 2**.

Regulatory Principle 17. The awarding body and its providers must have clear, fair and equitable systems, policies and procedures to manage appeals.

When reviewing the awarding body's appeal policy on SharePoint, it was identified that the detail of the policy does not include contact details of SQA Accreditation if a learner wishes to make a complaint about the way in which the awarding body has handled their appeal. It

may be useful to learners if complaints information was detailed, or their complaints policy signposted to.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 3**.

3 Acceptance of Audit Findings