Audit Report

Lantra Awards (Lantra)

14 December 2021

Contents

1 Background

This was the 14th audit of Lantra Awards (Lantra) since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation on 7 December 2000.

Lantra is an awarding body for land-based industries, and it currently has four SQA accredited qualifications across the Forestry sector. Lantra is a registered charity with charitable objectives to advance the education of the public and carry out educational research. Lantra's headquarters are based in Stoneleigh Bank, Coventry, CV8 2LG, however, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the audit was conducted remotely.

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 audit of Lantra, 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 Lantra complies with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements namely:

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

Awarding body documentation considered for review by the Audit Team includes all documents banked on Lantra'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

Lantra: audit date: 14 December 2021

Audit Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 26 January 2022

Audit Report to be signed by Lantra : 9 March 2022

Action Plan to be emailed
to regulation@sqa.org.uk by Lantra 9 March 2022

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 Lantra 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, two Issues have been recorded and one Recommendation has been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 15 Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR – 3 Logos and certificate requirements for SQA accredited qualifications	SQA Accreditation noted that the current certificate template evidenced at audit did not state the credit rating body on the certificate or the certificate transcript.	Low Risk
2. Principle 16 & 17	SQA Accreditation evidenced slight irregularity in the wording within the Compliments and Complaints Policy and the Appeals Policy. It was noted that it may be unclear when a learner would escalate a complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).	Low Risk

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 15	It is requested that Lantra provide any updates to SQA Accreditation prior to the e-certificate process going live to include details of how the e-certificate process is to be embedded.

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 Lantra'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 15. The awarding body must have effective, reliable and secure systems for the registration and certification of learners.

Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR – 3 Logos and certificate requirements for SQA accredited qualifications.

The SQA Accreditation Auditors reviewed the certificate templates provided on SharePoint. The certificate templates provided at audit date did not mention who the qualification had been credit rated by either on the certificate or the certificate transcript.

This also falls into the SQA Regulatory Directive 3 which states: 'The SCQF logo must be used on either a commemorative/learning programme certificate or certificate transcript, where the qualification/learning programme has been credit rated by a recognised credit rating body or where the credit rating of the qualification/learning programme has been approved by SQA's Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG).'

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

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

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

The SQA Accreditation Auditors reviewed Lantra's "Compliments and Complaints Policy V3_0" (reviewed 5th July 2019) and Lantra's "Appeals Policy POL-All-QUA-012". A slight inconsistency in the wording was noted which may mislead learners where to direct any complaints. Within the Compliments and Complaints Policy V3_0 there was no mention of where to direct any regulatory complaints. The Appeals Policy contained information and guidance on raising a complaint with SQA Accreditation. There was also mention on page 3 of the Appeals Policy of raising complaints to the SPSO for Scottish Learners. Further clarification is required when to escalate to the SPSO, i.e., the SPSO will not investigate matters of academic judgement but will investigate complaints against public services in Scotland after they have been through relevant formal complaints procedures.

It was also noted the email address noted on the policy was a generic SQA email and not SQA Accreditation's email.

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

2.2 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 15. The awarding body must have effective, reliable and secure systems for the registration and certification of learners.

Lantra are proposing a new e-certificate process whereby the default will be for students to receive their certificate electronically. SQA Accreditation request that Lantra provide regular updates prior to this process going live and to provide details of guidance provided to ensure the authenticity of certification.

It is recommended that Lantra provide updates to SQA Accreditation on when the e-certificate process goes live and details of how the e-certificate process will be embedded.

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

3 Acceptance of Audit Findings