



Provider Monitoring Report

Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)

20 September 2023

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1 Background

One provider was remotely monitored on 20 September 2023.

1.1 Scope

SQA Accreditation carries out quality assurance activity in line with its *Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy*. This involves monitoring a sample of the awarding body's approved providers or assessment sites. Provider monitoring visits will be conducted in a consistent manner within and between providers.

The aim of monitoring is to:

- ◆ ensure the awarding body's compliance with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements
- ◆ confirm that quality assurance arrangements are being conducted by the awarding body in accordance with its prescribed arrangements
- ◆ ensure that quality assurance arrangements are being conducted in a consistent manner, within and between providers
- ◆ ensure that providers are receiving the appropriate guidance, support and documentation from the awarding body in order to facilitate a high standard of qualification delivery
- ◆ inform future audit and monitoring activity for the awarding body

All Principles may be included within the scope of the provider monitoring activity.

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

SQA Accreditation provider monitoring reports are written by exception focusing only on those areas where corrective action is required or recommended.

1.2 Provider Monitoring Report Timescales

AAT provider monitoring date: 20 September 2023

Provider Monitoring Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 24 October 2023

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by AAT: 7 December 2023

Action Plan to be emailed
to regulation@sqa.org.uk by AAT 7 December 2023

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

- ◆ The awarding body will be sent a copy of the Provider Monitoring Report by email.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign the copy of the Provider Monitoring 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 Action Plan and return by email to SQA Accreditation.

The findings of this Provider Monitoring 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 Provider Monitoring 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 AAT as a separate document to the Provider Monitoring Report and must be submitted to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified in 1.2.

As a result of the provider monitoring activity, one Issue has been recorded and one Recommendation has been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 16	The Provider makes no mention of SQA Accreditation as the regulator in its <i>Complaints Policy and Procedure</i> .	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 9 and 13	The Provider could not provide evidence of continuous professional development (CPD) or standardisation for its staff.

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 provider monitoring will count towards AAT'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 Good Practice, Issues and Recommendations

The following sections detail:

- ◆ good practice noted by providers
- ◆ Issues recorded and Recommendations noted against SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements

2.1 Good Practice

The following areas of good practice were noted by providers:

Provider 1 highlighted: Good communication from the Awarding Body and a good relationship with the customer support team.

2.2 Issues

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

The Accreditation Auditor noted that the Provider's *Complaints Policy and Procedure* states:

'if complainants are still not fully satisfied with the outcome or the handling of a complaint, they can refer their complaint to the relevant Awarding Organisation, End Point Assessment Organisation, Ofqual, National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education who are the relevant qualification regulators'.

This clearly references some regulators with regard to escalation but makes no mention of SQA Accreditation's role when it comes to qualifications accredited by SQA Accreditation.

The Awarding Body must ensure its providers make candidates aware of their right to escalate complaints to SQA Accreditation as the Regulator of accredited qualifications accredited by SQA Accreditation.

This has been recorded as Issue 1.

2.3 Recommendations

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

and

Regulatory Principle 13. The awarding body and its providers must ensure that they have systems and processes which ensure the effective quality assurance of accredited qualifications.

The Accreditation Auditor noted that the Provider could not produce evidence to show that CPD and standardisation are monitored on a regular basis. The Provider stated that the most senior tutor 'mentors' other staff members, that the assessment team are in regular contact and that any issues are dealt with as they arise, but could not provide formal evidence of this taking place.

AAT Guidance for Training Providers V2.17 states that the 'AAT Course Coordinator' is accountable for 'Checking the CPD of the team on a regular basis'. While CPD and standardisation may be occurring, AAT may wish to add that evidence of this should be recorded, so that adherence to this guidance can be ensured and monitored.

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

3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings