



Provider Monitoring Report

Excellence, Achievement & Learning Limited (EAL)

19 October 2023 to 3 November 2023

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1 Background

Three providers were remotely monitored between 19 October 2023 and 3 November 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

EAL provider monitoring dates: 19 October to 3 November 2023

Provider Monitoring Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 10 January 2024

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by EAL: 21 February 2024

Action Plan to be emailed
to regulation@sqa.org.uk by EAL 21 February 2024

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 e-mailed to EAL 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. Principles 7 & 18	EAL must ensure that it informs SQA Accreditation when any actual or suspected cases of malpractice and/or maladministration are identified.	High

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 6	EAL may wish to review the function of authorising additional login access to Smarter Touch and EAL Connect where appropriate to ascertain whether improvements can be made.

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 EAL'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:

supportive and knowledgeable external quality assurer (EQA)

Provider 2 highlighted:

knowledgeable, helpful and very supportive EQA

quick response and resolution of queries

external quality assurance visits are being put in place more regularly.

Provider 3 highlighted:

excellent customer service

knowledgeable EQA who is quick to respond and answer any queries received from provider

2.2 Issues

Regulatory Principle 7. The awarding body must have an effective approach for communicating with its staff, stakeholders and SQA Accreditation.

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

EAL Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, Version 7.1, September 2022 states on page 4 that 'EAL will report malpractice/maladministration cases, where required.'

SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2021) state under 'Regulatory Principle 18' that 'the awarding body must inform SQA Accreditation when any actual or suspected cases of malpractice and/or maladministration are identified.'

During routine quality checks undertaken by provider 2 potential maladministration was identified on Tuesday 14 June 2022. In this case, a learner had been resultated for a wrong unit, resulting in the learner being certificated and a corresponding certificate issued by EAL on 10 February 2022, which needed to be withdrawn and replaced.

Provider 2 informed EAL initially on the 17 June of potential maladministration that had been discovered. On 21 June 2022 provider 2 liaised with key internal personnel and established the full information surrounding the incident.

An investigation report was then sent to EAL Customer Service Experience on 23 June 2022. An action plan from the maladministration report was submitted on 23 June 2022 and

sent to EAL Customer Experience on 4 October 2022. EAL Customer Experience informed provider 2 that they had forwarded and passed documents on to their External Quality Assurer (EQA) and EAL Compliance Team.

A replacement certificate was issued by EAL for this learner on 22 October 2022.

Having reviewed SQA Accreditation malpractice and maladministration records, the Accreditation Auditor can confirm that EAL had not informed SQA Accreditation of the suspected maladministration reported to EAL by provider 2 in June 2022.

EAL must ensure that it informs SQA Accreditation when any actual or suspected cases of malpractice and/or maladministration are identified.

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

2.3 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 6. The awarding body must continually review the effectiveness of its services, systems, policies and processes.

EAL-recognised providers can currently log in to manage their EAL Connect and Smarter Touch profiles. However, both providers 2 and 3 explained to the Accreditation Auditor that EAL may wish to consider the size of the provider who is delivering EAL qualifications and across different departments, when it comes to authorising log in access to both Smarter Touch and EAL Connect. Both providers 2 and 3 thought it would be helpful if more provider staff were authorised to log in and use Smarter Touch and EAL Connect.

EAL may wish to review the function of authorising additional login access to Smarter Touch and EAL Connect where appropriate to ascertain whether improvements can be made.

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

3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings