



# **Provider Monitoring Report**

## **Qualifications for Industry (QFI)**

**8 December 2022**

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# 1 Background

One provider was remotely monitored on 8 December 2022.

## 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

QFI provider monitoring date:	8 December 2022
Provider Monitoring Report approved by Accreditation Co-ordination Group on:	17 January 2023
Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by QFI:	28 February 2023
Action Plan to be emailed to <a href="mailto:regulation@sqa.org.uk">regulation@sqa.org.uk</a> by QFI	28 February 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](mailto: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 QFI 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, two Issues have been recorded and one Recommendation has been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principles 9 & 16	The provider-devised complaints procedure does not inform candidates that, if dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint to QFI, they can escalate a complaint to SQA Accreditation as the qualification regulator, as stipulated in the <i>QFI Centre Handbook</i> (V5, March 2021).	Low
2. Principles 9 & 17	The provider-devised candidate/learner appeals procedure (version 5) does not state that SQA Accreditation is unable to overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements, as stipulated in the <i>QFI Centre Handbook</i> (V5, March 2021).  In addition, the section on the contact details for the Regulatory Body does not include contact details for SQA Accreditation as the qualification regulator.	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	QFI should review the <i>QFI Centre Handbook</i> to ensure that it refers to the correct annex forms accurately and upload the updated <i>QFI Centre Handbook</i> to SharePoint.

## 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 QFI'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 the:

- ◆ quick turnaround times for certification
- ◆ excellent feedback and support given by its external quality assurer

### 2.2 Issues

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

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

The *QFI Centre Handbook* (V5, March 2021) states on page 15 that:

*The centre's Complaints policy should: Reference the complainant's right to complain, in turn, and once the previous stage has been exhausted, to the centre, to QFI as the awarding body, to the regulatory bodies (SQA Accreditation in Scotland, Ofqual in England and Northern Ireland, Qualification Wales in Wales). Users of public bodies in Scotland may then complain to the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) as the final arbiter. Contact details for these bodies should be provided.*

On reviewing the provider-devised candidates' complaints procedure (Version 3) from Provider 1, the Accreditation Auditor noted that it does not inform candidates that, if dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint to QFI, they can escalate a complaint to SQA Accreditation as the qualification regulator, as stipulated in the *QFI Centre Handbook* (V5, March 2021).

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

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

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

The *QFI Centre Handbook* (V5, March 2021) states on page 16 that 'The centre's Appeals policy should: Note that where appeals have been referred that SQA Accreditation is unable to overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements.'

On reviewing the provider-devised candidate/learner appeals procedure (version 5) from Provider 1, the Accreditation Auditor noted that it does not state that SQA Accreditation is unable to overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements, as stipulated in the *QFI Centre Handbook* (V5, March 2021).

In addition, the section on the contact details for the Regulatory Body does not include contact details for SQA Accreditation as the qualification regulator.

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

## 2.3 Recommendations

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

On reviewing the *QFI Centre Handbook* (V5, March 2021), the Accreditation Auditor noted that it references its annex forms inaccurately. For example, page 11 states that 'Where a potential conflict of interest has been identified, QFI must be informed via the Conflict of Interest declaration form at annex 7 so that measures can be put in place, i.e. external verification of assessment decisions can take place'; however, the Conflict of Interest Declaration form is at annex 6.

QFI should review the *QFI Centre Handbook* to ensure that it refers to the correct annex forms accurately and upload the updated *QFI Centre Handbook* to SharePoint.

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

### **3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings**