



Action Plan

This Action Plan must be completed electronically and submitted in Microsoft Word format to regulation@sqa.org.uk by 28 June 2023.

Issue number	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating	Proposed action and evidence to be provided (Failure to include a description of your intended methodology AND details of the evidence that you will provide could result in your Action Plan not being approved by ACG.)	Target date for completion by awarding body ¹	Date Issue closed out by SQA Accreditation ²
1. Principle 5	Staff at provider 2 highlighted that the SQA accredited qualifications are time-bound for three years and need refreshed on/before expiry. The Accreditation Auditor cannot find any information on this process in the awarding body documentation and the provider could not find any information either. In discussion with the Regulation Manager, it was confirmed that SQA Accreditation is not formally aware of the time bound nature of the SQA accredited	Medium	<p>I confirm that both SA001/SA002 qualifications regulated by SQA Accreditation have no expiry dates.</p> <p>We offer a range of SA001/SA002 products including; regulated (SQA Accreditation and Ofqual) and non-regulated refresher and awareness courses which we recognise that on occasion can cause confusion with centres.</p> <p>Our SA001 and SA002 product types include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulated qualifications (SQA Accreditation) – learners in Scotland 	31/07/2023 Extension to 30/9/2023	21/9/2023

¹ If the awarding body believes it has completed the action prior to approval of the Action Plan by ACG, insert the considered date of completion. The date will be subject to review depending on the quality of the evidence supplied.

² Issues can only be closed out once the evidence to complete the action has been quality reviewed and the Action Plan has been approved by ACG. The period of time between ACG approval and the date the Issue is closed out is not necessarily reflective of any quality issues.

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	provision and the use of a refresher qualification.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulated qualifications (Ofqual) learners in England • Non-Regulated – for centres and learners who do not require a regulated qualification (we plan to retire these at the end of the year and move to only having the regulated option) • Non-Regulated Awareness – this has no practical element and is for learners who only need to hold knowledge for example site supervisors • Non-Regulated Refresher –all learners working in the telecoms industry are required to upskill every 3 years which is a requirement of the Network Operative Passport Scheme (NOPS). This applies to all learners who have achieved a regulated and/or non-regulated SA001/SA002 qualification. <p>We plan to discuss at our next qualification review meeting (July 2023) and in consultation with our SQA accreditation manager if a requalification option may prove to be the best</p>		

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			<p>route and apply an expiry date to the SA001 and SA002 qualifications.</p> <p>We are also currently updating our qualification and centre handbook and will include all product types and routes to achievement. Product types and routes to achievement were discussed at the last centre round table event. The quality team will ensure centres are clear on our product types during their remote and onsite audits.</p> <p>EVIDENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda Qualification review meeting • Centre Handbook • Qualification handbook • Round table event presentation • Screen Print Quartz no expiry date 		
2. Principles 5 and 13	The updated <i>Centre Handbook Guidance For Centres</i> , 1 March 2023 details two annual external quality assurance (EQA) activities. However, there is an <i>EQA Handbook, October 2022</i> on SharePoint which details three annual activities.	Low	We are currently in the process of updating all of our policies, processes and guidance. We will amend both documents for consistency. For clarification, our EQA audits include 2 annual audits (onsite and remote). There is an additional option of an unannounced audit where high-risk concerns are raised regarding a centre.	01/10/2023	5/7/2023

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	Hence there is inconsistency in information in this regard.		EVIDENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EQA Audit reports • Centre Handbook 		
3. Principles 7 and 8	The Accreditation Auditor found it very difficult to gain access to providers for the purpose of remote provider monitoring.	High	<p>We have issued an email communication to all centres confirming regulators' requirements to access centres for remote provider monitoring as per signed terms and conditions.</p> <p>The quality team will also reinforce this message at all audits with centres.</p> <p>Additional to this we will add a statement in the centre handbook.</p> <p>We have also created a contact role on Quartz as the main point of contact for direct communication.</p> <p>EVIDENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre Handbook • Email communication • Screen Print Quartz – contact role 	30/06/2023	29/6/2023

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4. Principle 12	At the time of provider monitoring, provider 1 was using the awarding body's online system for theory tests. However, provider 2 has not been able to register learners for the SQA accredited qualifications since 31 March 2023, as Smart Awards informed the provider that they were waiting on the approval of an amendment to the assessment methodology for the online platform. The Accreditation Auditor is unsure why there is a disparity in the availability of qualifications and assessment methods between providers.	High	<p>This relates to the confusion about the product types that centres are offering.</p> <p>Until we gain approval from SQA Accreditation to offer online testing – centres are only able to offer the Ofqual or non-regulated options which are online.</p> <p>Centres are not able to register for an online SQA Accreditation qualification as this has not been activated on our Quartz system.</p> <p>Centres can, however, register for a paper-based test for the SQA Accreditation versions.</p> <p>We are working with our accreditation manager to finalise our AC2 form for online testing approval.</p> <p>We have also added Scotland and England to the qualifications on Quartz at the point of registration to avoid further confusion.</p>	30/06/2023	29/6/2023

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			EVIDENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC2 Form • Screen print of centre registrations showing product (England or Scotland) • Screen print of where qualifications are not live for online bookings 		
5. Principles 12 and 9	When discussing invigilation arrangements with staff at provider 1, it was highlighted that there was no updated invigilation guidance relevant to the online platform.	Medium	<p>We have written a draft online invigilation policy for centres and have received feedback from our SQA accreditation manager. We are updating this policy in line with the feedback.</p> EVIDENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invigilation guide for centres 	01/10/2023	5/7/2023
6. Principle 14	The awarding body needs to clarify the information contained within their <i>Reasonable and Adjustments and Special Considerations policy</i> in terms of externally assessed qualifications and ensure that providers are clear on requirements.	Medium	<p>We are currently in the process of updating all of our policies, processes and guidance, this includes our reasonable adjustment and special consideration policy and our workflow process on Quartz.</p> EVIDENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable adjustments and special consideration policy 	01/10/2023	21/9/2023

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable adjustment and special consideration • Quartz workflow 		
7. Principle 16	The complaints procedure at providers 1 and 2 had no reference to escalation of complaints to either Smart Awards or SQA Accreditation as the regulator.	Low	<p>Remote and onsite audits to review provider policy to confirm reference made to Smart Awards or SQA accreditation.</p> <p>We have created a policy guide for centres outlining our expectations of what is required in centre policies.</p> <p>EVIDENCE EQA audit reports Centre Policy Guidance Centre Guidance</p>	31/12/23	5/7/2023
8. Principle 18	The malpractice policy at providers 1 and 2 did not state that all suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration would be reported to the awarding body immediately.	Low	<p>Remote and onsite audits to review provider policy to confirm reference made to Smart Awards or SQA accreditation.</p> <p>Evidence - EQA Visit report to confirm policy sampled.</p>	31/12/23	5/7/2023

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			<p>We have created a policy guide for centres outlining our expectations of what is required in centre policies.</p> <p>EVIDENCE EQA audit reports Centre Policy Guidance</p>		

Action Plan approved by ACG on Wednesday 14 June 2023