



Audit Report

Associated Sports Qualifications (ASQ)

11 September 2019

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1 Background

This was the fourth audit of ASQ since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation in July 2013.

ASQ is an awarding body which has been established to provide qualifications to service the national governing bodies of sports. ASQ currently work primarily with golf coaching qualifications. Its headquarters are at the Belfry, near Sutton Coldfield.

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 ASQ, 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 ASQ complies with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements namely:

- ◆ *SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles* (2014)
- ◆ 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 ASQ'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

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| ASQ audit date: | 11 September 2019 |
| Audit Report approved by Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: | 16 October 2019 |
| Audit Report to be signed by ASQ: | 27 November 2019 |
| Action Plan to be emailed to regulation@sqa.org.uk by ASQ: | 27 November 2019 |

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

- ◆ The awarding body will be sent two signed copies of the Audit Report by post.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign both copies of the Audit Report and return one by post to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified above.
- ◆ The awarding body will also be emailed a copy of the Audit Report (for information only) and an electronic 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 two signed copies of the approved Action Plan by post.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign both copies of the Action Plan and return one by post 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 ASQ 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, no Issues have been recorded and four Recommendations have been noted.

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 3 | It is recommended that the awarding body creates a contingency plan that sets out a clear strategy as to what actions the awarding body will take if the golf coaching market becomes saturated, including plans for other qualifications and income streams. |
| 2. Principle 4 | It is recommended that ASQ's Conflict of Interest policy be genericised so that it is applicable to all regulators. |
| 3. Principle 6 | It is recommended that the awarding body review a set number of documents quarterly, enabling a review of all documents over a wider period of time, such as three years. Alongside this, it is also recommended that they remember to upload all revised documents, where appropriate, to SQA InfoCentre (SharePoint). |
| 4. Principle 9 | It is recommended that the awarding body complement their qualification design and development process by setting out clearly the interaction, including timeframes, between ASQ and SQA Accreditation in relation to qualification accreditation submissions. |

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 ASQ'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

No Issues were recorded.

2.2 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 3. The awarding body shall have clearly defined business planning processes which show evidence of management commitment, decision making and ongoing review.

During discussions with the awarding body representatives, it was established that the main governing body of the area in which ASQ's primary qualifications are based on, set limitations as to the number of qualified golf coaches allowed into the market place in order to prevent saturation. This is outside of ASQ's control, but it is recommended that the awarding body, in knowing these limitations, creates a contingency plan that sets out a clear strategy as to what actions the awarding body should take if this upper limit is close to being reached and plan for other qualifications and income streams.

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

Regulatory Principle 4. The awarding body shall continually review the effectiveness of its business services, systems, policies and processes.

The Accreditation Auditors reviewed the awarding body's Conflict of Interest policy and noted that it only contained references to another regulators requirements. Although the policy was otherwise fine and the process was acceptable, it is recommended that the policy be genericised so that it is applicable to all regulators.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 2**.

Regulatory Principle 6. The awarding body and its providers shall maintain accurate documents, records and data.

The awarding body is still in the process of embedding their new version control process, which the Accreditation Auditors reviewed and consider to be sufficient. However, the annual timescales that the awarding body has applied to review all organisational documents appears to the Accreditation Auditors to be excessive and likely to be unmanageable in the long-term. Therefore, it is recommended that the awarding body employ good practice in this area and review a set number of documents quarterly, enabling a review of all documents over a wider period of time, such as three years. Alongside this, remembering to upload all revised documents, where appropriate to SQA InfoCentre (SharePoint).

This has been noted as **Recommendation 3**.

Regulatory Principle 9. The awarding body shall ensure that it has robust systems and processes for the identification, design, development, implementation and review of qualifications, which meet the needs of users.

The Accreditation Auditors are aware that the awarding body has just completed an overhaul of their qualification design and development policy and process which the audit team were unable to test at the time of the audit. Although the written processes appeared to be sufficient, it is recommended that the awarding body complement the process by setting out clearly the interaction, including timeframes, between ASQ and SQA Accreditation in relation to qualification accreditation submissions.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 4**.

3 Acceptance of Audit Findings

For and on behalf of ASQ:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

Print name

Print name

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Signature

Signature

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Designation

Designation

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Date

Date

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