Audit Report

Excellence, Achievement and Learning Limited (EAL)

16 May 2018

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1 Background

This was the fourteenth audit of Excellence, Achievement and Learning Limited (EAL) since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation in October 1997.

EAL is a nationally recognised awarding body dealing with qualifications mainly in the engineering industry. EAL has offices in both Leeds and Watford.

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.

This was a scoped audit of EAL based upon, but not limited to, the areas identified within *SQA Accreditation's Awarding Body Audit and Provider Monitoring Strategic Plan for 2017–18*.

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 may not always detail areas where compliance or good practice was found.

The audit was designed to ensure EAL 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 EAL'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

EAL audit date: 16 May 2018

Audit Report approved by

Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 30 May 2018

Audit Report to be signed by EAL: 13 July 2018

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 e-mailed a copy of the Audit Report (for information only).

The findings of this Audit Report will be published on SQA Accreditation's website following signed agreement.

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 an Action Plan.

As a result of the audit and post-audit activities, zero Issues were recorded and two Recommendations were noted. As no Issues were recorded there is no requirement for an Action Plan to be produced.

A Recommendation has been noted where SQA Accreditation considers there is potential for improvement. The awarding body is advised to address any Recommendations noted as good practice. However, measures to correct or prevent these are not mandatory and therefore do not form part of an Action Plan.

Recommendation	Detail of Recommendation noted
1. Principle 5	It is recommended that EAL carry out a health check on its policies and procedures to ensure that they include SQA Accreditation definitions and appropriate reference to *SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles (2014)*.
2. Principle 10	It is recommended that the awarding body carries out work to establish how many of its providers are aware of Foundation Apprenticeships as a product, establish if any providers have learners on programmes, and implement a strategy to ensure learners are sampled separately as part of external verification activity.

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 EAL's Quality Enhancement Rating, which will, in turn, contribute towards future quality assurance activity. Where no Issues are recorded, the awarding body's current Quality Enhancement Rating will not be affected. Further detail on how the Quality Enhancement Rating is calculated can be found on the SQA Accreditation website. Where no Issues are recorded, the awarding body's Quality Enhancement Rating will remain unaffected.

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 identified prior to or during the audit of EAL. The Audit Team would like to draw attention to several areas of good practice identified during the audit.

The awarding body has very robust systems in place for business planning and maintaining regulatory compliance. EAL carries out monthly compliance audits by sampling at least one Regulatory Principle each month and invites all business areas to feedback into improvement plans which ultimately informs the annual self-assessment submitted to SQA Accreditation. This approach encourages ongoing improvement across the organisation, ensures that the awarding body is continually reviewing its systems and processes, and facilitates the self-assessment process.

2.2 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 5. The awarding body shall provide clear information on its procedures, products and services and ensure that they are accurate and appropriate to SQA accredited qualifications.

A number of EAL documents were reviewed on SharePoint prior to the audit. Some of the policies and guidance documents contained non-SQA Accreditation definitions, but were being applied generically to all EAL qualifications. Some policies did not refer to *SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles (2014)* where they should have, but did contain references to another regulator's documentation. The awarding body was provided with examples of these areas on the day of the audit.

It was recommended that EAL carries out a health check on its policies and procedures to ensure that they include SQA Accreditation definitions and appropriate reference to *SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles (2014)*. This has been noted as **Recommendation 1.**

Regulatory Principle 10. The awarding body shall ensure that it has the necessary arrangements and resources for the effective delivery, assessment and quality assurance of SQA accredited qualifications.

The Audit Team and EAL staff discussed recent correspondence sent out to awarding bodies offering Foundation Apprenticeships. It was recommended that the awarding body carries out work to establish how many of its providers are aware of Foundation Apprenticeships as a product, to establish if any providers have learners on programmes and to implement a strategy to ensure learners are sampled separately as part of external verification activity. This has been noted as **Recommendation 2.**

3 Acceptance of Audit Findings

For and on behalf of EAL: For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

Print name   **Print name**

                                             George Brown

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Signature   **Signature**

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Designation   **Designation**

                                             Head of Accreditation

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Date   **Date**

                                             4 June 2018

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