



Audit Report

First Aid Awards Ltd

11 February 2021

Contents

1 Background	1
1.1 Scope	1
1.2 Audit Report and Action Plan Timescales	2
1.3 Summary of Audit Issues and Recommendations	3
1.4 Risk Rating of Issues	5
2 Detail of Audit Issues and Recommendations	6
2.1 Issues	6
2.2 Recommendations	7
3 Acceptance of Audit Findings	8

1 Background

This was the fifth audit of First Aid Awards Ltd (FAA) since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation on 29 September 2010.

FAA is a nationally recognised awarding body with approved centres operating throughout the United Kingdom. FAA has been accredited to offer a range of first aid related qualifications, including Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW), First Aid at Work (FAW) and Paediatric First Aid. FAA's headquarters are situated in St. Austell, Cornwall.

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 remote audit of FAA only a sample of 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 FAA 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 FAA'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

First Aid Awards Ltd audit date:	11 February 2021
Audit Report approved by Accreditation Co-ordination Group on:	31 March 2021
Audit Report to be signed by FAAL:	21 May 2021
Action Plan to be emailed to regulation@sqa.org.uk by FAAL:	21 May 2021

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

- ◆ The awarding body will be sent a signed copy of the Audit Report by email.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign the copy of the Audit 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 copy of the Action Plan and return by email 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 FAA 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, two Issues have been recorded and two Recommendations have been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 15, 5	The printing specification that Providers use does not include specific robust quality assurance criteria regarding printing e-certificates.	Low
2. Regulatory Principles Directive 3	Update FAA certificate templates to clarify the credit rating body as SQA Accreditation.	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 1, 6, 10	Strengthen awarding body processes regarding the recording of formal activities such as meeting decisions and external quality assurance standardisation activities.
2. Principle 6	Review existing policies on FAA's SharePoint site, including any links and remove those that are no longer current.

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 FAA'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

Regulatory Principle 15. The awarding body and its providers shall have effective, reliable and secure systems for the registration and certification of learners.

And

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.

The accreditation auditors reviewed the awarding body processes for e-certification and noted that there were no specific criteria published for providers as to the physical printing of e-certificates. If the awarding body wishes to continue allowing providers the ability to print e-certificates, it is recommended that FAA set out very specific quality requirements regarding how this should be done, such as making sure that only plain paper is used and not provider-headed paper, etc. This was previously raised as a recommendation in a prior audit, however, in the current climate with an emphasis on providing e-certification, SQA Accreditation considers this to be a potential risk.

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

Regulatory Principles Directive (RPDIR) — 3 Logos and certificate requirements for SQA accredited qualifications

The Accreditation auditors reviewed the FAA certificate templates and identified that the current credit rating acknowledgement statement on their certificates was not specific enough as it did not mention SQA Accreditation as the credit-rating body.

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

2.2 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 1. The awarding body shall have clearly defined and effective governance arrangements.

And

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

And

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 accreditation auditors could not evidence formal recordings of meeting decisions, specifically in relation to pandemic oriented issues. The auditors accepted that the challenging environmental circumstances as a result of COVID-19 made it difficult to properly record outputs from the meetings. Also, the accreditation auditors could not evidence formal recordings of the EQA standardisation activities during the past year, although the auditors did not doubt that the normal standardisation discussions took place.

It is therefore recommended that the awarding body strengthen its processes relating to the formal recording of awarding body activities and consider adapting its contingency planning processes to take account of ways to record quick, necessitated decisions during critical situations, to provide a subsequent auditable trail.

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

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

The awarding body informed the accreditation auditors that there had been an overhaul of some of the larger and centre-specific FAA policies. The new policies are under final review, to be made available shortly. Therefore, it is recommended that once these are published, FAA review and update documents, policies, and processes, including links that are on the FAA SharePoint site, where appropriate.

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

3 Acceptance of Audit Findings

For and on behalf of FAAL:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation: